



HONOURED

Medal to be presented to former airman



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SUN SMILE

Getting ready for the solar eclipse



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Town will host Saint George's Day event

PREPARATIONS are under way for St George's Day celebrations in Dudley next month with the major event happening in Halesowen.

Dudley Council has announced the event will be held in Halesowen town centre on Saturday, April 25. Somers Square will be the venue for outdoor activities with the Cornbow Hall hosting a free tea dance.

Activities start at 10.30am and include a performance from Halesowen Scout Band, a sing-along with Maggie O'Hara and an official opening by the Mayor of Dudley at noon.

A brass band will play and Sedgley Morris Men will entertain the crowds with their traditional folk dancing. There will also be baby dragon puppets walking among the crowds.

Entertainment will be held throughout the day on the main stage and there are still slots available for dance groups and choirs interested in performing (call 01384 815222).

Visitors will enjoy children's rides, a barrel organ, face painting and craft activities.

The popular bake-off competition will return and the regular farmers' market will be open and the town's library will host storytelling and children's activities.

Train death man was 48

A MAN who was killed having been struck by a train in the Black Country was a 48-year-old from Wolverhampton, it has been confirmed.

The man was hit near Dudley Port station at 12.05pm last Wednesday, March 11.

British Transport Police spokesman Dominic Sutton said the man's next of kin had been informed. He added officers were not treating his death as suspicious and were preparing a report for the coroner.

DEBBIE LEADING WAR ON CANCER

A CANCER survivor from Halesowen who is fighting a second battle with the disease is fronting a TV campaign.

Debbie Ringham, aged 38, is leading the nationwide TV and poster campaign calling on women to join forces at Cancer Research UK's Race for Life.

In the advert, Debbie leads an army of women against cancer whilst wearing a specially designed pink head-dress.

By Charlie Benton

"By standing together in the bid to beat cancer, we can fight back against this devastating disease," she said.

Debbie, who works for the charity at the University of Birmingham as a research engagement manager, was first diagnosed with thyroid cancer at the age of 24.

Successful treatment, which involved surgery followed by radioactive iodine to destroy any leftover cancer cells, led to her joining the charity.

Then, in January of last year, Debbie discovered she had breast cancer and, in June, found out it had spread to her liver.

Debbie said: "I deal with cancer every day in my work but it was still a huge shock to be told I had the disease a second time.

Determined

"Even though I was going through treatment, I was determined to complete the first Race for Life Pretty Muddy event in Birmingham last year.

"It felt like I was getting my own back on cancer, which is why I was thrilled to then be asked to take part in the TV advert.

"It really captures the fighting spirit behind the thousands of women who sign up each year."

As well as the national television campaign, Debbie can also be seen on posters and billboards across the UK as part of the drive to recruit around 530,000 women to join in with the Race for Life in 2015.

Debbie was diagnosed with breast cancer after finding a lump and had 21 weeks of chemotherapy followed by surgery. But last summer she suffered a further setback when doctors discovered the cancer had spread to her liver.

"I'd been feeling pretty positive until that point," said Debbie. "But hearing that the cancer had spread was the worst news.

"When I went back to see my doctor again, I was reassured there are different treatments to try and keep the cancer under control."

She contributed to research directly by donating blood and breast tissue, and also gives tours of the charity's Birmingham facility. Debbie is now back at work full-time and taking hormone therapy, shrinking the secondary tumour.

She is planning to take part in Race for Life Pretty Muddy event at Cofston Park, Longbridge, on July 17. Enter at www.raceforlife.org or call 0300 123 0770.



Debbie Ringham from Halesowen is calling on women to form a pink army at Race for Life and Pretty Muddy

More shops closing than opening

MORE shops closed down than opened in the town centres of the Black Country last year.

In total, there were 371 new store openings and 524 closures across the Black Country and Staffordshire as retailers responded to the rise of online shopping.

The net loss of 153 shops was worse than 2013 when it was 76.

The research from the Local Data Company for accountants PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) found that Dudley saw 11 closures and two openings. But in Stourbridge town centre it remained steady with five closures cancelled out by five openings.

Wolverhampton had a greater net loss with 35 closures and 14 openings. Walsall had 21 shops shut and 12 opening.

Rob Hunt, restructuring partner at PwC in the West Midlands, said: "This year's numbers expose the harsh impact of 'macro' changes on the high street, especially in certain sub-sectors — increasing regulation for money shops, the advance of technology for some phone operators and the continued shift to the internet in the clothing sector. Despite the benign economy, the net loss of shops has accelerated.

"Despite the continuing problem of closures, new sub-sectors such as dis-

count shops and charity shops keep growing. The strength of the restaurant and fast-food sectors is also a boost for the high street."

Birmingham city centre also had a net loss of shops with 87 closing and 75 gained.

The analysis highlights the changing profile of town centres across the West Midlands, with mobile phones shops the hardest hit with a net loss of 44.

Charity shops with a net increase of 11, e-cigarettes outlets, jewellers, shoe shops, financial advisors, coffee shops and discount stores were among those opening in 2014.

Contract means 50 care jobs on the way

FIFTY jobs are being created after a new home care contract was awarded for services in Halesowen.

Dudley Council has awarded Carewatch Care Services Black Country the contract to deliver home care services in the town.

The contract, which starts next month, involves delivering high quality care including to older people with dementia, people with learning difficulties and those with complex care requirements living at home.

A recruitment open day is being held at its office on the first floor at DBH Castlemill, Burnt Tree, Dudley, on Wednesday, March 25 from 10am to 4pm.

Shelley Eggison, registered care manager for Carewatch Black Country, said: "We're delighted to have been appointed by Dudley and are committed to delivering a personal, caring and supportive service to the customers of Halesowen.

"We're looking for compassionate people to join our team of professionals who enable our customers to retain their independence, dignity and security, in their own home."

The roles includes providing personal care and practical support, such as helping with shopping and accompanying people.

Scarlet fever cases on rise

MORE than 200 people have been diagnosed with scarlet fever in the past seven months as cases rocket across the Black Country.

The highest number has been in Dudley where 106 patients have fallen ill with the disease since September. In neighbouring Sandwell 51 cases have been recorded.

Health boss Councillor Rachel Harris said: "Public Health England says the reason behind the increase is unclear but may reflect long-term natural cycles."



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New culture training role at museum

BLACK Country Living Museum will be taking on a training programme bringing on a new generation of experts in arts and culture. Officials at the popular attraction have announced they will be employing a fundraising fellow as part of the Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy programme. The museum is one of only three in the country to have been chosen to help.

Fellowships were created as a partnership with leading arts and education organisations in England with funding from the Arts Council.

Responsible

They aim to create the next generation of leading development directors — the people who are responsible for developing culture, generating income and showcasing

the arts as a charitable cause. Individuals will arrive at he museum, in Tipton Road, Dudley, to learn on the job from experts in the field, supported by a training and learning programme and gain hands-on experience in fundraising.

In addition, the director will be helping with various challenging projects at the museum.

Carolyn Sankey, Director of De-

velopment at Black Country Living Museum, said: "We are delighted to become a host organisation for the Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy Programme, which will support a recent graduate or individual looking for a career change, with training and hands-on fundraising experience and enhance Black Country Living Museum's Development department."

Shocking figures for domestic violence

MORE than 2,500 cases of domestic violence were reported in homes with children in Dudley in the space of a year, new figures reveal.

The borough children's chief called the figure 'shocking' and said he believed there were many more people suffering in silence.

The information has come to light in a council report as the council launches its new domestic violence and abuse strategy on Monday.

Councillors try way to curry favour

MEMBERS at Dudley Council have staged the first Curry Forum.

Dozens of people attended the event at the East 2 West restaurant in Brettell Lane, Amblecote.

They took the opportunity to quiz councillors on a number of issues, while tucking in.

The aim of the Curry Forum is to engage with as many communities as possible and particularly those unlikely to attend council meetings.

It is thought to have been the first local authority meeting of its kind.

Dudley Council leader Pete Lowe described it as a 'genuine move to get more people involved in local democracy'.

Questions asked included how shop fronts could be improved and what was being done to attract more traders to Dudley Market.

On shop frontages, Councillor Lowe said: "We have about £160,000 available through our community forums for this very thing.

"It's up to the local businesses to put in a bid for that via the community frontages and work with us to improve the look of some of these shops."

Councillor Tim Crumpton, cabinet member for children's services, said the authority and support services were more committed than ever to tackling the issue.

He said: "When you first see the figure it is shocking.

"It is not just mums and dads who are involved. We know there are children seeing terrible things going on between parents but there are lots of mechanisms now to get something done.

Priority

"Ensuring our children are in a safe home environment is an absolute priority and at the council we enjoy close working relationships with partner agencies to help identify issues and take action where appropriate."

He added: "Not that many years ago there wasn't anybody taking domestic violence as seriously as it should be, people would say 'it's just a domestic'. It shouldn't be like that.

"Now we are encouraging more people to report it.

"From what I can tell it is not an abnormal figure in Dudley compared to the rest of the country."

Particularly concerning will be the number of attacks in homes with children.

In each of the 2,568 cases between April 2013 and March 2014, children lived at the address and may or may not have been present during violence.

Apprentices help rose bloom



Painting the rose red — Luke Hodgkiss and Dean Wilson at work in Brierley Hill

A SCULPTURE depicting a rose in the heart of a Black Country town has blossomed again after receiving a fresh coat of paint.

The Brier Rose was placed outside Brierley Hill Civic Hall in 1999 and over the years has become one of the town's best-known landmarks. But after so long outdoors, the vivid red and green of the sculpture had started to fade.

Now the piece, inspired by the town name, has been restored to its former glory

after bosses at Ian Williams Ltd agreed to fund the repainting of the rose. The work has been carried out as part of National Apprenticeship Week by apprentice painters Dean Wilson and Luke Hodgkiss.

Councillor Tim Crumpton said: "National Apprenticeship Week gives Dudley Council a great opportunity to remind people we are the highest recruiter of apprentices in the Black Country."

The sculpture of a wild rose was designed by borough artist Steve Field.

Busy time ahead for Beacon's bus service

BLACK Country sight loss charity Beacon is launching a bus service to get volunteers out into the community.

The Beacon Centre for the Blind, in Sedgley, starts running the Beacon Bus tomorrow (Friday) 20 at Stone Street in Dudley town centre.

Arwyn Jones, Beacon's chief executive, said: "While most people are aware of the Beacon Centre in Sedgley, not everyone knows that we have a vibrant outreach programme, providing support to local people living with sight loss across the region.

"Our new Beacon Bus will allow our friendly team to get closer to the people who need our services, as well as spreading the word about Beacon and what we do.

Familiar

"We are certain that this brightly decorated vehicle will soon be a familiar and welcome sight around the neighbourhood and we can't wait to see the 'buzz' it generates."

The bus can also be booked by schools, colleges, care homes or local businesses. To check availability or to find out more, contact fundraising@beaconvision.org or call 01902 880111.

Rail crossing village misery

LEVEL-CROSSING barriers are staying down for too long after trains have passed, causing heavy traffic to build up, it is claimed.

Drivers using Station Drive, in Blakedown, are facing long waits, causing queues to tail back to the main A456 Birmingham Road. Some motorists are even reversing back on to the busy main road.

Residents said it had been a problem since the village's signal box was removed and the crossing was automated.

Network Rail spokesman Jon Crampton said the issue was now being looked into.

Flower stall bid

A TRADER has lodged a bid to sell flowers and potted plants outside Stourbridge Crematorium.

Anthony Carney has applied to Dudley Council for a street trading licence. He wants to run a stall in South Road by the crematorium on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

College to host open day for all

STAFF will be welcoming potential students to an open day at Halesowen College on Saturday.

The Whittingham Road Campus will be open from 10am until 2pm. There will be A-level subject introductions as well as tours.

Student experience director Alex Griffin said: "The college is open to all so come and meet our talented students and staff teams and explore the exceptional range of courses we have on offer."

The college has spent £20 million upgrading facilities.

Injured horse rider airlifted to hospital

A WOMAN suffered back and hip injuries and a suspected fractured pelvis after falling from a horse.

The incident happened in Gipsy Lane, Wolverley, and the woman was airlifted by the Midlands Air Ambulance to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The ambulance service was also called to the incident on Saturday afternoon.

Spokesman Jamie Arrowsmith said it was believed the rider suffered a significant fall from a horse which had bucked.

Police in legal battle over jobs

WEST Midlands Police are fighting to avoid a massive pay out to officers ordered to retire after completing 30 years service.

Almost 500 of those who lost their jobs as a result of the new regulation are demanding compensation on the grounds the decision was 'ageist'.

West Midlands Police are believed to have already run up almost £90,000 in legal fees.

Nursery is rated as 'outstanding'

A NURSERY in Dudley has been rated as 'outstanding' following an inspection.

Ofsted praised Nether-ton Park Nursery School and Children's Centre, saying youngsters had a 'wonderful time'. The report said the staff were 'extremely passionate' about their work and provide families with an 'inclusive, outstanding' service.

Bible Day Mission

THE Black Country Mission holds a special Bible Day on Sunday at Cradley Heath Baptist Church and Ebenezer Baptist Church in Netherton from 1pm to 3pm. Free bibles will be handed out.

Police give too many cautions, says MP

A BLACK Country MP has criticised 'inappropriate' police cautions.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin said police cautions were preventing many crimes from coming to court as they were handed out too often as a 'slap on the wrist'.

A report prompted by magistrates in Dudley has shown that police cautions are used inappropriately in up to a third of cases.

The finding was revealed in a new report from MPs on the Home Affairs Select Committee on the use of 'out-of-court disposals' including cautions, fines and community resolutions.

Mr Austin said: "I called for a report on this issue after local people and magistrates told me that too many offenders are being given a slap on the wrist. Now this report confirms that up to a third of offenders should face tougher action."

"Police in Dudley work flat out to keep the public safe but victims have to feel that justice is being done when cases don't go to court."

"This is really important because local people want more police on the streets, more offenders brought before court and more criminals put in jail."

Death crash driver charge

A MOTORIST has been charged with causing death by dangerous driving after a crash in Dudley.

Jamie Wharton, aged 29, suffered serious injuries when a Nissan Skyline he was driving careered through a garden wall in Netherton last year. His passenger, Timothy Pearson, 23, from Quarry Bank, died in the incident.

Wharton, of Birch Copice, Quarry Bank, has now been charged over the crash that happened last June and is due to appear at Dudley Magistrates' Court on March 31.

Charity rock gig

A LIVE music event is being held at a rock club to raise money for the Brian Tumour Charity. It will be £3 admission for Brainstock at Rock Zombie in King Street, Dudley, on Saturday from 2.30pm with bands including The Meharis, The Supers and Pencils for Pistols.

College wins appeal over pedestrian crossing

A PEDESTRIAN crossing to improve the safety of students at Dudley College has finally been given the go-ahead by a planning inspector.

For more than two years staff and students at Dudley College have campaigned for the new crossing on The Broadway, saying lives were being put in danger on the busy road. The most recent accident was shortly before Christmas when a student was injured when hit by a car.

Dudley Council had rejected the college's

application following objections from residents who were worried about noise from students and were concerned that traffic queuing at the crossing would cause air quality problems.

But planning inspector Ian Radcliffe decided noise from the crossing would be minimal, as would the effect on air quality and did not outweigh the safety benefits from having the crossing.

In a report following his visit to the town centre site on February 19, he said: "The

noise and disturbance for nearby occupiers generated by the crossing would be minimal and the effect on air quality overall would be negligible. The highway safety benefits of the proposed development heavily outweigh its adverse effects."

College principal Lowell Williams said: "We are pleased that the planning issue for the puffin crossing has finally been resolved by the Planning Inspectorate."

"Although this has taken over two years to reach a successful conclusion, the appeal

has delivered the right outcome. Common sense has prevailed."

"The addition of a controlled crossing has always been a requirement in the development of the Dudley Learning Quarter."

He added he was 'exceptionally disappointed' the plans had been refused in the first place, especially as the council's officers had backed the scheme. Tens of thousands of pounds had been spent on the appeal, which could have been better spent on providing facilities for young people.

Regulars rally to protect pub after store proposal**PLANS to build a convenience store on a Stourbridge pub car park would increase traffic on a busy road, worried residents say.**

The Hare & Hounds, in Wynnall Lane, Wollescote, is among a number of pubs sold by Marston's Brewery and taken on by property investment firm New River Retail.

While bosses from the firm do not want to close the pub, they do propose to build a Co-operative store on part of the car park.

Landlord Lee Sargeant, 45, is battling the plans saying it would leave him with just six car parking spaces, effectively killing his trade.

More than 60 residents packed into a public meeting held at the pub on Monday.

People said there had already been a number of accidents along the road and fear the store would increase the traffic. Others said that if the pub was forced to close it would destroy their social lives.

Stephen Burley, 61, of Brook Crescent, said: "It will be right next to a very tight and dangerous junction. It is just not the right place for a shop."

Frank and Denise Cragg, of Seymour Road, said they were also concerned about the scheme.

Mr Cragg, 50, an engineer, said: "If there are only going to be a limited number of spaces for the pub then where are the people using the convenience store going to park? They are going to start parking up

By Lee Watton

along the road outside and in nearby streets, right outside people's homes. This is already a busy road and this is going to make the problem worse."

Mrs Cragg, 48, a teaching assistant, added: "The pub is important to the community of this area. It is a social hub for this area and no-one wants to see it put at risk."

Sarah Smith, 31, of Amos Road, said the pub had already raised £5,000 for the Air Ambulance and £2,400 for Great Ormond Street Hospital. "If there is nowhere to park then people will not come. It will mean charities will miss out," she said.

Roy Foxall, 68, of Grove Road, has been a regular at the Hare & Hounds for 50 years. "If it wasn't here it would destroy the social life of a lot of people," he said.

Mr Sargeant said he was delighted with the amount of support with around 300 people already signing a petition opposing the plan.



Marvel Comics fan Ross Wilkes with his plastic Iron Man suit created on a 3D

Fan prints his own Iron Man hero suit

A COMIC book fan has printed his own full-size Iron Man suit.

It is like that worn in the blockbuster superhero movies starring Robert Downey Jr, as Marvel Comics' billionaire genius Tony Stark.

Ross Wilkes, 20, of Halesowen, a flower wholesaler, bought a Vellman K8200 3D printer in 2013 for around £700, then printed the suit piece by piece over 14 months.

"I would put the printer on in the morning before I went to work and it would be done by the time I came home," he said. "By the end I had around 600 separate pieces and it took me a month to solder them all together."

The printer works by layering plastic to form a solid object.

"They are still relatively new but 3D printing is something that has always fascinated me," said Mr Wilkes. "It's a slow process and, yes, it is frustrating because it can go wrong a lot. But it's been worth it."

The suit is now a prize possession but adds that he cannot paint it as the only paint suitable is nail varnish. "It would take me longer to paint it than it did to build it!" he added.

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A FORMER SNP leader Gordon Wilson says first minister Nicola Sturgeon should declare Scottish independence if the UK votes to leave the EU but Scots want to stay in. So that's just one single referendum to a) get us out of Brussels' clutches and b) solve the Scottish Question. Bring it on.

LAY 100 pennies on the table in front of you to represent the annual spending of the UK. Now, given that politicians of all parties agree that "Defence of the realm is the first duty of any government," how many of those pennies would you spend on defence? The answer so far, from all the main parties, is barely 2p. One serious suggestion in Whitehall is that Britain could hit its target of spending two per cent on defence by including the money paid in pensions to old soldiers. This is not soldiering; it is creative accountancy.

REMEMBER how computers were going to create the 'paperless office'? This week I bought a shirt on the internet. As soon as the deal was done, I received a form to print, confirming my order. A few minutes later, I got an emailed receipt, followed two minutes later by an order reference number which was followed, after another two minutes, by an order confirmation. The next day the boss of the shirt-making company sent yet another lavish email. We have swapped the paperless office for a dark, dense forest of electronic clutter.

IN just 24 hours, 300,000 adoring fans signed an email petition calling for Jeremy Clarkson to be reinstated in Top Gear. I wonder how these numbskulls would react if their son, brother or husband came home and said: "I got punched at work today"

THERE'S nothing like childlessness to give you a sugary, sentimental view of family life. The Pope castigates people who do not visit their frail and elderly parents in homes, declaring: "It is sickening to see the elderly discarded. It is a sin." Memo to his Holiness: In real life, some parents do not like their children and some children do not like their parents.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Care funding among lowest in the country

FUNDING for care for elderly people at their homes across the West Midlands is among the lowest in the country – sparking fears residents are being put at risk.

A minimum of £15.74 an hour should be paid for home care, according to a body representing carers, but in Walsall the council shells out just £11.90, in Sandwell the figure is £12.17 and £12.62 in Wolverhampton.

By Adam Burling

The average price in the West Midlands as a whole was £13.90 per hour, with Sandwell, Walsall and Birmingham in the lowest 25 per cent in the UK.

Dudley Council pays £13.74 an hour and Staffordshire £14.39. The lowest average price in the region, paid by Birmingham City Council, was £11.56 per hour. Only Worcestershire County Council paid a rate above UK Home Care Association's minimum price of £15.74 per hour.

Basic

The body has calculated that this figure is the least that should be paid to cover a decent standard of care and other costs, such as transport for staff.

Bosses say this includes a basic hourly rate for contact time of £6.50, £1.24 for travel time and £4.25 for operating costs.

Council bosses argue that they are under severe pressure and having to make millions of pounds of cuts.

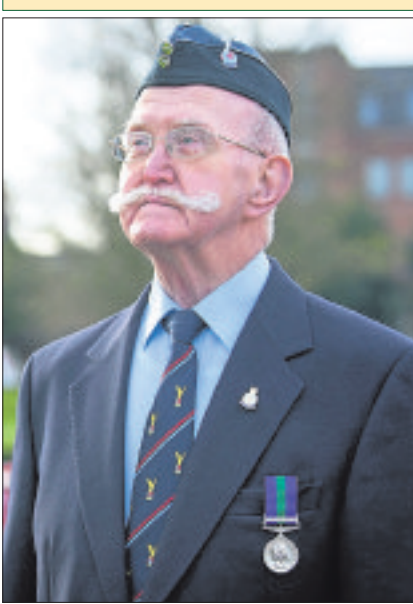
Home care is often chosen as an alternative to going into a residential home.

The majority of the care is funded by councils, but are largely delivered by independent and voluntary sector providers under contracts.

UKHCA's policy director Colin Angel said: "Unless this underfunding is addressed, the independent and voluntary sector will continue to struggle to recruit and retain careworkers with the right disposition, training and qualifications."

Councillor Dave Branwood, Dudley Council's cabinet member for adult and community services, said: "Despite significant financial pressures Dudley Council pays the highest rate per hour for domiciliary care anywhere in Birmingham and the Black Country."

Honour for RAFA stalwart



'It's humbling,' says John Deane of his medal honour

A FORMER RAF serviceman will receive a British Empire Medal at a special ceremony today (Thursday).

John Deane has been honoured with the medal for 50 years of service to the Royal Air Force Association's Dudley branch. It was announced in the Queen's New Year's Honours.

A ceremony will take place in the Mayor of Dudley's parlour when the 78-year-old will have his award officially presented to him by West Midlands' Lord Lieutenant Paul Sabapathy CBE.

Mr Deane, from Kingswinford, said: "It's humbling to think I have been nominated for something I enjoy doing."

Mr Deane is president and treasurer of the branch and organises the collections for the association's charity Wings Appeal, as well as the annual Remembrance parade. He was integral to the campaign that raised £64,000 in just over a year for a new cenotaph in Dudley town centre in 2001.

Mayor Councillor Margaret Aston said: "He really is an inspiration to us all."

Villa fan's precious collection is stolen

A HAUL of precious Aston Villa Football Club programmes, including one signed by the European Cup winning side, has been taken in a burglary near Stourbridge.

Thieves forced their way in through a rear window of a home in Hockley Brook Lane, Belbroughton.

Match programmes stolen from the address dated back to the 1950s and 60s.

Of particular interest is a match day programme from the 1982 European Cup Final between Aston Villa and Bayern Munich.

Winning

West Mercia Police say this programme has been signed by all members of the winning Aston Villa team, which makes it a much sought after item.

A spokesman for the force said: "The injured party has worked hard to make this distinctive collection of programmes, which he has collected over numerous years."

The burglary happened between 4pm on March 7 and 3pm on March 9.

It is unclear at this stage if the burglary was carried out by more than one individual.

Anyone with any information is asked to call West Mercia Police on 101, quoting incident number 372.

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Pressure on police to slash numbers

UP to 2,500 West Midlands Police officers and staff are set to be axed in the next four years as the force battles to save a further £120 million.

Chief Constable Chris Sims warned the cuts would result in fewer bobbies on the beat and major changes to the force's neighbourhood policing programme.

Some £126m has already been cut from the budget since 2010 and 3,000 people lost from the payroll. Overall, this means the strength of the force is expected to fall by more than 5,000 people to just 8,500 in a decade.

Beat

West Midlands Police Federation deputy chairman Tom Cuddeford said: "You need boots on the ground and fewer officers working the beat means less engagement with local communities."

The force's 2020 Blueprint, which pinpoints 36 major changes to working practices, aims to make the best use of new technology to cushion the effects of austerity.

Ch Con Sims said: "With shrinking resources we must rise to this challenge. We have got to deliver at least as good, if not a better, way of policing."

"The public will be no less safe but the way we provide that security will be different."

131 arrests in one year at six football grounds

PITCH invasions, racist chants, fireworks – these are some of the offences football fans were arrested for in the West Midlands.

Last year, a total of 131 arrests were made at the homes of Wolves, West Bromwich Albion, Walsall, Aston Villa, Birmingham City and Coventry City.

Three fans were arrested at Molineux over 'racist incidents' while one supporter was dealt with for racist chanting at the Hawthorns and three at Villa Park. At St Andrews, there were three arrests for 'indecent chanting'.

By Richard Guttridge

Figures show a total of 131 arrests were made at football grounds in the West Midlands during 2014. That was down by nearly half on the year before when there were 233 arrests.

Police took action with fans who took fireworks into grounds, hurled objects and ran onto the pitch. There were also a number of incidents involving drunk fans.

During the period, the most arrests were made at Molineux. But police made 17 arrests following the FA Cup quarter final between Aston Villa and West Bromwich Albion, while Watford supporter Nick Cruywys was left in a critical condition after being attacked as he left Molineux.

Chief Superintendent Chris Johnson, from West Midlands Police, said: "The manner in which we police

football fixtures has evolved over recent seasons. The basic principle remains that while public safety remains our absolute priority, football-related violence and disorder will be dealt with robustly."

Keeley Baptista, from football anti-racism campaign group Kick it Out, said: "Incidents still remain commonplace across all levels of the game."

A total of 90 arrests were made before, during and after Wolves games over the past two years. At the Hawthorns, 59 arrests were made during 2013 and 2014, which included one supporter who had an offensive weapon. Villa Park saw a total of 70 arrests while there were 84 at city rivals Birmingham.

The figures did not say whether offences were committed by home or away supporters.

Rockers back Christina charity gig



Organiser Dave Williamson of the rock night with bands Vicious Nature, Voodoo Sioux and Bitter Sweet Revenge

ROCK bands hit the right note to raise money for a scout hut in memory of Halesowen schoolgirl Christina Edkins.

Three bands performed at The Asylum venue in Birmingham to raise money for the refurbishment of Halesowen's scout hut in Mucklow Hill.

The groups taking part were Bitter-sweet Revenge, Vicious Nature and Voodoo Sioux and Saturday's event

was organised by Dave Williamson, a friend of Christina's father. He hoped to raise more than £2,500 for the re-vamp of home to Lapsal Scout Group.

Nurse

Christina, 16, was stabbed to death on a bus in Birmingham on the way Leasowes High School two years ago.

She had been due to sit a mock exam

as she worked towards her dream of becoming a nurse.

Her killer Philip Simelane, 23, from Walsall later admitted manslaughter the grounds of diminished responsibility and was detained indefinitely under the Mental Health Act.

Builder Mr Williamson said local up and coming bands were enthusiastic about raising money for the Christina Edkins fund set up in her memory.

Parks geese cull is not ruled out

COUNCIL chiefs have refused to investigate controversial geese culls in Sandwell parks – and have not ruled out future culls.

The Save Our Sandwell Canada Geese campaign called for an investigation into the culling of geese between 2013 and 2014. More than 4,000 signed a petition.

Sandwell Council Health and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Committee has recommended a policy document be sent for consultation but has refused to rule out future culls.

Save Our Sandwell Canada Geese spokesman Ian Carroll said: "They will not give us a straight answer."

Councillor Paul Sanders said: "We considered the petition and decided no further action be taken with regards to it."

Shidas Lane site will open longer

COUNCILLORS have backed longer opening hours at Oldbury recycling centre.

The centre in Shidas Lane, run by Sandwell Council, is open from 8am until 8pm during the week. It previously closed at 6pm.

Weekend hours have increased from 8am to 4pm to 7am to 6pm until October.

Environment boss Councillor Maria Crompton, said: "Residents can take advantage of the brighter evenings by using the HRC until 8pm during the week and 6pm on weekends."

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews

THREE teenagers have now been arrested and bailed by the Metropolitan Police, after being detained in Turkey on suspicion of plotting terrorist acts in Syria. And how exactly does this make our streets safer?

SHOULD he stay or should he go? The great Jeremy Clarkson debate seems to divide public opinion like few other matters at the moment.

A million people have so far signed an online petition calling for the former Chronicle motor-ing writer to be reinstated as the Top Gear frontman.

Meanwhile a YouGov poll of 780 UK adults said that 45 per cent believe the purveyor of tweed and faded denim should be sacked over what has been quaintly described as a 'fracas'.

What I can't understand is how any of these people feel they are in a position to pass judgement. Whether or not Clarkson keeps his job must surely be down to what happened at the hotel on the night in question, and nothing else taken into consideration.

How many of the 45 per cent calling for Clarkson to be sacked, or for that matter the million people who think he's Jack the Lad, have any idea of the events that took place?

If Clarkson really did punch a producer in the face, then he's obviously on very thin ice indeed. Nobody, wherever they work, should be allowed to as-sault a colleague in that way, and it would be hard to see how he could keep his position.

However, if he didn't punch anybody, then he should be al-lowed to get on with his job. It is a matter about discipline in the workplace, not an ideological battle between white van men and Guardian readers.

If 45 per cent of the popula-tion think Clarkson is a loud-mouthed, opinionated oaf, that is fair enough. He probably wouldn't argue with them. But it is not their place to decide what we can and can't watch on tel-evision.

Top Gear is one of the BBC's most commercially successful programmes, bringing in millions of pounds for the corporation, much of which will be spent on the sort of worthy programmes the Clarkson-bashers love.

Look, I don't like Strictly Come Dancing very much, but if peo-ple want to watch it, that is up to them. I won't be starting a petition for Len Goodman to be sacked.

One aspect to the Clarkson row which seem to have slipped by unnoticed. The BBC report-edly paid nearly £6,000 to stay at the Simonstone Hall Hotel. The venue no doubt also derived considerable kudos from having some of the biggest stars on television staying there. Would it really have been too much for someone to have worked a few hours overtime so the Top Gear team could have had a cooked meal when they returned from a long day filming?



Lucy Blanche Holden outside the Park Inn in 1925



Edwin Alfred Holden pictured with his son Teddy



Director Lucie Holden with Sam the beagle

Century of history is all bottled up

ADAM BURLING takes a look at Holden's brewery's humble beginnings as it marks its 100th anniversary

A BLACK Country brewery is **toasting its 100th anniversary** **this year – thanks to Edwin Al-** **fred Holden abandoning plans** **to follow in his father's foot-** **steps.**

Born in 1875, Edwin was the youngest of seven sons. His father Daniel was a skilled shoemaker and after he left school, Edwin initially decided to join him and older brother Walter in the family business.

He also worked in the Trust in Providence pub in Washington Street, Dudley, combining his drinking with courting the landlord's daughter, Lucy Blanche Eliza-beth, who worked behind the bar.

The couple married at St Andrew's Church, Netherton, in October 1898, when Edwin was 23 years old and his new bride 20.

Licence

Edwin's father-in-law persuaded the newlyweds to take the tenancy of The Britannia Inn at Northfield Road, Neth-erton where they stayed for six years. When Lucy's father died in 1900, her mother kept the licence of The Britan-nia and in 1904 the couple moved to the Struggling Man Inn, Dudley.

The couple went on to run a number of pubs including the Atkinson's house, The Britannia Inn in Netherton.

They ended up at the Summer House in Woodsetton in 1910, where they stayed until 1920, but in August 1915 Edwin and Lucy bought the freehold of The Park Inn in Woodsetton, where the brewery has been based ever since.

The Park Inn had a cottage and a garden at the side and at the back a well



Former owner Edwin Alfred Holden, who died in 1920 aged 45

kept-bowling green and brewing equip-ment previously used by Atkinson's.

Harry 'Ossie' Round, the brewer at the time, brewed a very dark strong mild twice a week and a special strong ale at Christmas. By 1920 Edwin had fallen ill and he died in August, aged 45.

Lucy took over as licensee of The Park and was in charge until 1938, and son Teddy was to follow in his parents' footsteps. The bowling green was her pride and joy and it was kept in impec-able condition by a few of the regulars who were paid in pints each week.

By 1930 Lucy's eyesight was failing due to diabetes and by 1934 she was blind, though she was still active in the day-to-day running of the pub.

Teddy married Clara Perry-Ham-mond in June 1938, but three weeks before the wedding his mother died at The Park Inn aged 60.

From 1940-44, the firm was kept busy brewing beer for the local RAF stations, and in 1944 a third pub was added to the estate when The New Inn in Coseley in 1944 was bought 'slightly bomb damaged' for £2,500.

Edwin Holden's Bottling Company was formed in 1943 at the back of The Park Inn by Clara Holden's brothers, Samuel and Wilfred Hammond.

In August 1966, Samuel died unex-pectedly aged 52, having been a director for 21 years.

His son, Paul, succeeded him, taking over the bottling in 1967 after spending two years at Phipps of Northampton Brewery as a student brewer.

In the early days, it bottled not only the Holden's range of beers but national brews for clubs, free houses and whole-salers.

The 1970s saw a move to draught cask -conditioned beer, with production run-ning at around 200 barrels per week, or 57,500 pints and the ensuing decades saw the company expand.

Estate

Before his death in 1981, Teddy had acquired several pubs including The New Inn, Rose & Crown, The Trumpet and had also extended the brewery.

His sons, Jonathan and Edwin, went on to increase the Holden's estate, which included the acclaimed Great Western and Codsall Station.

In 1991 Jonathan joined his father at the brewery after learning the trade at Morrell's Brewery in Oxford. Jonathan was instrumental in the creation and launch of Golden Glow which is now Holden's best-selling ale.

During the 1990s, The Ivy Bush in Smethwick, The Bell at Trysull, The Shrubbery Cottage, Oldswinford, and The Lamp Tavern, Bloxwich, were also added to the Holden's estate.

In December 2002, Edwin died, aged 57, after a short illness.

Over the next 10 years, there were purchases of three further pubs – The Waterfall, in Warley, Ye Olde Robin Hood Inn, Ironbridge, and The Fellows in Dudley.

● Memory Lane – Page 10

WEEK IN POLITICS

with Daniel Wainwright

WOULD you take £1,000 from Tony Blair? The former Prime Minister is offering £106,000 to help Labour campaign in its 106 target seats.

And given that the Tories have a lot more money in their coffers, Ed Miliband's party could proba-bly do with every penny it can get.

Labour sends out begging emails every few days. This week it resorted to one signed by David Cameron saying how much he loved Labour. The joke was that it wasn't THE David Cameron but a Scottish sup-porter with the same name.

But back to Blair and his campaign funds. UKIP's James Carver calls Tony Blair an 'em-barrassment' and reminds everyone that he was the Prime Minister that took us into Iraq and Afghanistan. He says the donations should have been re-fused.

He also calls it the 'Blair rich project', which means unless he thought of that one himself there's a spin doctor working for him somewhere who is clearly earning his crust.

Labour probably doesn't need to pay too much heed to its op-ponents on this though. After all, that's what opponents do. They oppose stuff. Where it does need to do a bit of soul search-ing is among its own members.

The six constituency Labour parties around here to whom Mr Blair is handing his money – Cannock Chase, Dudley South, Stourbridge, Stafford, Halesow-en and Rowley Regis and Wol-verhampton South West – are all grateful.

After all, Mr Blair secured three election victories in a row. Even the 2005 one was a major-ity of 66 seats. David Cameron and Ed Miliband would probably consider 10 a great result in May.

It is also more than Mr Blair needed to do for Labour. He's making millions on the world stage and hardly needs to give two hoots about his old party. Indeed, to listen to some party members, you'd think he was the one who had made Labour un-electable in the 1980s.

Yet for all the things people did not like about him in the end, Labour are within touching dis-tance of returning to government after just a single term in oppo-sition.

Some candidates such as the one in Dundee who rejected the money, however, might feel hyp-ocritical for accepting it if they opposed Mr Blair on Iraq.

And while the £1,000 offered will undoubtedly come in useful for leaflets and other campaign material, the big dilemma is whether it is going to be more hindrance than help.

For if Tony Blair is a divisive figure within Labour, he is even more so to the electorate the party has to win over.

And that's a rather ironic coda for the political career of a man whose pinnacle was in uniting both left and right wing voters behind him.

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Community will tackle grot spot

AS a residents of Lutley Lane, my neighbour Jackie Cartledge and I have already been in touch with James Morris MP and have been liaising with Councillor Jeff Hill to highlight these issues. Just surveying a 100m stretch of Lutley Lane we were horrified with what we found — it has gone beyond just litter but also building rubble and goodness knows what else.

Lutley Lane is a busy road, a 'rat-run' for commuters (and HGVs!) from the Stourbridge and Dudley area to the A456 and to the M5. It is a quick cut through for those

wishing to avoid the traffic lights in Hagley. This in itself creates issues with litter being discarded from vehicles.

I do not understand the mentality of people who fly tip. If you have gone to all the trouble of loading the waste into a vehicle to drop off on a lane in the middle of the night, why not just go to the council recycling centre at a normal time?

We have, as a community, arranged a road closure for litter picking on May 17.

RACHEL WHITEHEAD
Hayley Green

Respect for rural hedgerow is lacking

I REFER to M Hankin's letter in the Halesowen Chronicle regarding the amount of litter along Lutley Lane.

I too regularly pick up litter over the weekend along Hagley Wood Lane on the way up to Clent.

I collect at least a bag of discarded cans, bottles, etc, every time.

I agree that councils could do more but it comes down to education in the end.

We taught our children to take home all litter and NEVER drop it, but so many families are not taught to respect the countryside.

I see many bags of cans and bottles thrown in the ditches but I don't take the risk of removing these.

I have on several occasions telephoned Bromsgrove Council when I see fly-tipping.

M WARD
address supplied

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
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expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Penalty points for littering motorists

I FULLY agree with M Hankin's concerns about the amount of litter strewn alongside most roads within a mile or so radius of built-up areas.

It is a blight and an eyesore to the lovely countryside around here, and seems to come from throwing take-away materials out of cars and lorries and dumping bin bags.

Where I live it extends all along Manor Way and up along the motorway access road. What can be done about it? I suggest a three point penalty for drivers who throw or allow passengers to throw rubbish out of cars or lorries, plus 20 hours litter picking to ensure they understand the impact of what they are doing.

Could offenders on non-custodial sentences be put to good use by litter picking? Could the council not do more? Should there be an 'litter tax' on take-away outlets to enable councils to clear up?

There are some litter bins but are they emptied often enough and are they placed appropriately?

More education of youngsters in schools is needed and some of the old public service adverts we used to see on TV to raise awareness of the implications of littering. Perhaps James Morris could look into the matter and take effective action to improve the look of his blighted constituency?

A JOHN
address supplied

Pensioners have paid in

I WHOLEHEARTEDLY agree with C Gwilliams regarding his remarks about the unfair comments made by the younger generation, who seem to think we have an unfair advantage during these difficult times.

I left school at 16 and finally retired from work 51 years later. During that period I had only six weeks when I was out of work after retiring from the military.

So in 51 years of working, paying my taxes and National Insurance, my debt to the State amounts to a little over £300 in jobseekers allowance.

I have earned my State Pension, my Army pension and my occupational pension. I have paid into the funds that provide them.

I have a bus pass, I've used it three or four times since it was issued. I drive a car, so I pay into the State in the form of VAT, fuel duty and car tax. So all you moaners who think you are hard done-by — do something for yourselves instead of expecting others to feathered you.

TREVOR MANSELL
Norton

Seeking nuns on bicycles

CONCERNING the letter in March 12 edition from P Cole regarding the nuns.

There used to be a convent until the mid-1980s next to Our Lady and St Thomas of Canterbury Roman Catholic church on Trindle Road in Dudley.

Could the nuns visiting the bike shop have been from there?

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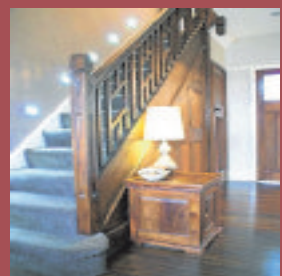
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Barry beats path back to early days of rock

FROM attending a school run by Franciscan Fathers to going on tour with legendary rockers AC/DC – these are just some of the chapters in the colourful life of Barry Spencer Scranage.

And now the drummer has started work on a book chronicling his experiences from boyhood to playing with some of the biggest names in music.

The musician, who was born in Smethwick but now lives in Stourbridge, is looking for some help with the book and the release of archive material featuring performances by musicians such as Black Sabbath.

Barry said he had a turbulent childhood in and out of care and at the age of eight, he left the Black Country to attend a school run by Franciscan Fathers in Dorset.

Drummer

He started playing skiffle and early rock 'n' roll strongly influenced by performers such as Lonnie Donegan. It wasn't long before he was involved in his first band called The Shakedown. After leaving school, Barry returned to the Black Country.

At a local pub, he heard A Way of Life which featured future Led Zeppelin drummer John Bonham. The pair quickly became friends and when Mr Bonham left the band, Barry took his place. During the early to mid-70s, Barry worked at Birmingham light and sound company LSD.

It was his experience in this field that led him to become a lighting technician during AC/DC's Highway to Hell tour where he became friends with frontman Bon Scott and the Young brothers Angus and Malcolm. "Although I did not realise it at the



Rock musician Barry seen in 1969



Memoirs – Barry Spencer Scranage



Barry drums with Stevie Young in Starfighters, on tour in 1980

time this was the start of the next phase of my career as a musician," he said.

"Malcolm and Angus said 'why don't you form a band?' and suggested their nephew Stevie."

The band became Starfighters and released the single Heaven and Hell and I'm Falling. The band won a prestigious support slot on AC/DC's Back in Black tour. But Barry could not complete the tour after he was left devastated by the death of his old friend John Bonham. Barry also played on

early Blizzard of Oz sessions after Ozzy Osbourne left Black Sabbath. "It was a crazy experience. I still have recordings of some of the sessions which people have never heard. I would like to get some of this material out there so it can be heard by fans," he said.

"I have already started the book which starts very early in my life.

"I have a lot of memories and a lot of stories and I want to share them." He said if anyone wanted to help they could contact him by e-mail at barryspencerscrannage@yahoo.co.uk

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New bus fleet rolling out across region



National Express West Midlands boss Peter Coates with Centro's John McNicholas and Kath Hartley

A £5 million fleet of modern eco-friendly buses will be hitting a major route through the Black Country as part of a new investment programme.

The 24 new buses will be rolled out along the busy number nine route between Stourbridge and Birmingham city centre through Sandwell and Halesowen.

National Express West Midlands have launched a fleet of new ultra low emission buses on the number nine bus route.

The new buses will reduce harmful emissions by 75 per cent and are part of a record £34 million investment in 171 new vehicles by National Express West Midlands during 2015.

With another new bus arriving every day for the next few months, by September all 171 of the vehicles will be carrying passengers across the West Midlands.

Managing director Peter Coates said: "The buses, which are all built in Britain, will have more comfortable seats, better lighting and crystal clear CCTV."

Lidl depot near M6 is set to bring in 500 jobs

LIDL'S plans to create up to 500 jobs at a new distribution centre in Wednesbury will make a 'massive difference' to the town, according to a councillor.

The 450,000 sq ft base will be built near Junction 9 of the M6.

Lidl has conditionally acquired the site from landowner St Francis Group and is working with Opus Land to develop it. The supermarket firm says the centre will serve stores across the Midlands.

It has been welcomed as a boost for Wednesbury and the rest of the Sandwell borough by Councillor Elaine Costigan.

She said: "It's wonderful news for Wednesbury. Five hundred jobs is a huge amount and will make a massive difference."

Economy

Managing director of Opus Land Richard Smith said he was pleased the plans were moving forward.

"This is a major distribution centre for Lidl and will bring a wide range of benefits to the borough of Sandwell," he said.

Director of St Francis

By Heather Large

Group Gareth Williams added: "This deal will provide Lidl with a great location for its distribution centre, which in turn will help boost the economy in Sandwell."

The plans will see the creation of managerial and office-based jobs in addition to full-time warehouse roles operating on a three-shift basis, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

When it opens, the centre will be the size of approximately six professional football pitches, say those behind the plans.

Councillor Darren Cooper, leader of Sandwell Council, has pledged to work with the developers to help recruit workers from the borough to fill the roles.

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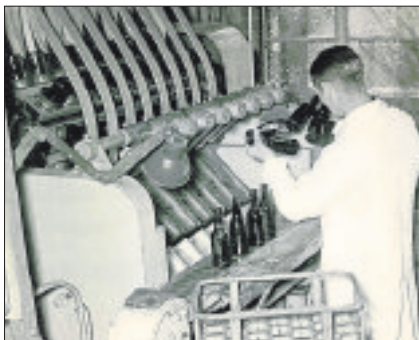
The Park Inn bowls team looking sharp in their suits and ties in the late 1920s



Director Edwin Holden Jr, Tom Poulton, and chairman Edwin Snr



Fausto Aloia filling barrels at Holdens Brewery in Woodsetton



A worker labelling bottles at the plant during the 1950s



Bottles of ale being prepared by Holdens' staff ready to distribute throughout the Midlands

Cheers – raise a glass to brewery centenary

THE brewing industry has changed dramatically over the last 100 years – but one of the Black Country's best known firms remains as popular as ever.

Holden's is celebrating its centenary year, and from humble beginnings the family-run business is now expanding as drinkers return to real ale.

Although the equipment at its site has become more modern, bosses are keeping traditions alive despite seeing production soar. The essence of the brewing process remains the same as it has for decades, though the scale has increased.

One of just 33 family-owned independent breweries in Britain with 20 pubs across the Black Country, Holden's expansion will see its base at the Park Inn, Sedgley Road, Woodsetton, extended and its ale production increased from 50,000 pints a week to 75,000.

A new tank room will be completed, increasing capacity by 50 per cent. New micro breweries such as the

MEMORY LANE

by Adam Burling

Backyard Brewhouse in Brownhills are building up a reputation but the Holden family say few can match their history and pedigree.

The extension has been built at the rear of the site, in George Street, and will see extra fermentation tanks installed.

Director Abi Kemp, whose great-grandmother Lucy was a driving force behind establishing the brewery in 1915, said: "It is really exciting year for us and it's lovely that we still have family members running the business. These are really exciting times for us."

"We are moving forward but we are a family business with a lot of history. We want to celebrate the last 100 years and give people the chance to learn about how the company has developed."

As part of the latest revamp, the old warehouses at The Park Inn were taken down and rebuilt, a new two-storey office block was constructed on the

site of the old off licence, and 18 new tanks installed. A test kitchen, bottle store and office suite are also part of the three-storey development.

Managing director Jonothan Holden said: "There has been a resurgence in the popularity of ales in recent time and this has been a massive benefit to us. This expansion is necessary for us to build on the business."

The brewery has a popular line of its own bottled beer now, but bosses say they want to keep focusing on draught in pubs to keep the industry going.

The Park Inn is steeped in history, with photographs of the Holden family, their workers and changes to the brewery displayed through the pub.

The brewery is hosting an open day on July 18 and 19 with guided tours and a mini beer festival.

Among other plans to mark the centenary is an ale around each of the company's 20 pubs. Those who complete the tour can then swap their completed card for Holden's centenary memorabilia. And a new brew is being created in honour of former West Bromwich Albion hero Tony Brown, called Bomber Brown.



Therese Holden, Abi Kemp and Jonothan Holden



The office and shop of Holden's Brewery, which is this year marking its centenary

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Allowances freeze
'will save £31,000'



Sandwell Borough Council leader Councillor Darren Cooper who has backed the decision to freeze allowances

FREEZING councillors' allowances will save a Black Country council £31,000, its leader has stated.

Sandwell Council rejected a proposed two per cent rise saying they wanted to stand by residents in the face of massive cuts in funding from the Government.

The move came despite the council needing to slash £63 million from its budgets by 2017.

Council leader Darren Cooper said: "Nationally there was a 2.2 per cent 'cost of living' increase for local government employees that came in on January 1. Sandwell's councillors voted unanimously not to accept this rise, which will save the council around £31,000 a year.

"This isn't a reflection on the hard work councillors do for their residents.

"But I don't feel it would be acceptable for members to take a pay rise when we are dealing with government cuts and having to make further savings."

The council has also agreed to freeze council tax for a fifth year.

Taser used after party ended with cue threats

A ROW over pictures taken on a mobile phone at a pub party ended with police having to use a Taser on a man, a judge was told.

The disagreement spilled into the street after Amritpal Dhanda tried to calm things down, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard. But he got caught up in the dispute again while waiting for a taxi.

The 43-year-old father of three waited outside the British Queen in Birmingham Road, Oldbury, explained Mr Edward Soulsby, prosecuting.

Dhanda went back into the pub and came out with a pool cue intending to scare people who were attacking his brother, it was said.

But he 'saw red,' started wielding it as a weapon and became so aggressive that police had to deploy a Taser before being able to arrest him, continued Mr Soulsby.

Mr Charnjit Jutla, defending, said: "There is no evidence to suggest that he actually used any violence and the incident was short-lived but there came a point when he went out of control.

"He saw red after the police arrived. He was aggrieved because he thought the opposing group were

by John Scott

getting away with it and accepts that his behaviour was unacceptable. This was wholly out of character. He is a hard working family man."

Dhanda from Hugh Road, Smethwick, admitted using unlawful violence and possessing an offensive weapon. He was given a 12-month community order with 140 hours of unpaid work and £300 costs.

Judge Peter Barrie told him: "Any passer-by who came upon this late night alcohol-fuelled disorder outside a pub would have seen you completely out of control.

"But I accept that you did not start the violence and saw your brother being physically attacked."

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Summer Holiday is nostalgic '60s show

THE sunny summer season will be arriving early with a little help from an operatic society, which will be staging a musical based on the Cliff Richard film Summer Holiday.

The TAB Operatic Society, based at Dudley Wood Methodist Church in Cradley Heath, will be performing the stage adaptation of the hit movie, in which the pop star and his friends travel across Europe in a double decker bus looking for romance.

It will be a feast of nostalgia for those who remember the swinging 1960s.

The shows will be daily at Brierley Hill Civic Hall from March 24 to March 28, starting at 7.15pm, with a matinee on March 28 at 2pm.

The show will feature the hits Bachelor Boy, Living Doll, Move It, On The Beach, I Could Easily Fall In Love With You and The Young Ones.

Audrey Henwood, a producer, director and choreographer with the society, said a 50 strong team had been involved with the production, of which there are 10 main characters.

Cheerful

She said the drama group had been producing shows in the Dudley area for more than 60 years, having originally been based in Old Hill when it was known as the Tabernacle Society.

Currently, there are 25 actors with the group aged between 15 and 79, though the society is looking for new members.

Mrs Henwood said: "Summer Holiday is a very cheerful and lively show and will provide great entertainment."

To buy tickets for the show, phone 07722 417962.

For more information, or for information on joining the society, visit the www.taboperatic.com website.

Fingers crossed for clear skies to see the sun smile

A NEAR total solar eclipse of the sun will bring a rare astronomical spectacle to the UK this week that will not grace the skies again for another decade.

Across the Black Country the eclipse is set to bring out thousands of sky-gazers to witness the phenomenon as the moon moves in front of the sun shortly before 8.30am tomorrow (Friday).

At that time the region's streets could well resemble some bizarre science fiction scene, with people decked out in cardboard-rimmed glasses clamouring to get a look at the eclipse.

In the UK the proportion of the sun covered by the moon will increase towards the north, with 89.3 per cent covered in the Black Country.

The eclipse is set to begin at 8.25am and reach its maximum effect at 9.31am, before ending at 10.40am.

Experts have predicted an array of dazzling effects, including small crescents of light transposed onto the ground and an other-worldly chill in the air as the sun is blocked out.

Simon Barnett, of the Wolverhampton Astronomical Society, described what people can expect to see.

He said: "We're not going to get totality in the UK, you have to go to the Faroe Islands for that, but this is a very big eclipse."

Caution

"It's rare to get one of this magnitude. Nearly 90 per cent of the sun's diameter will be hidden by the moon, so the light will appear dimmed."

"A small crescent of the sun will appear visible, as if it's lying on its back with horns pointing upwards. Around 9am there will be a slight cold tinge in the air. There could also be a change in the sky's colour to the north. There will be a general gloom and the planet Venus could come into view in the east."

Mr Barnett added that extreme caution should



See the sun smile — weather permitting

be taken when staring at the sun. He said: "Under no circumstances should anyone gaze directly at the eclipse," he said. "Glasses with special filters should be worn, and even then I wouldn't recommend looking for more than a minute. Under no circumstances should people use a telescope or binoculars."

The Royal College of Ophthalmologists said looking directly at the Sun can lead to retinal burns and may cause significant, sometimes permanent, loss of sight.

Holly Hall Academy in Dudley has provided students with free eclipse glasses and solar telescopes so they can watch the eclipse unfold, all under the watchful eye of design teacher Mark Townley, an avid astronomer for more than 30 years. He said: "The last major solar eclipse was in 1999 and the next one isn't until 2026 so it's important to give our students the opportunity."

Travellers on railways face misery over Easter period

RAIL passengers in the West Midlands will face replacement buses with train disruption over the Easter weekend.

London Midland services between Bescot Stadium and Rugeley Town will be closed from Good Friday, April 3, until Tuesday, April 7. Buses replace trains between Tame Bridge Parkway and Walsall and Rugeley Trent Valley because of work being done by Network Rail (NR).

There will also be issues on the West Coast Main Line. The Easter work will see some sections of lines shut with buses replacing trains on some routes.

Euston

One of the biggest projects is at Reading in Berkshire while another big project, at Watford in Hertfordshire, will mean disruption to journeys in and out of Euston station in London.

There will also be disruption to trains in and out of London's Liverpool Street station, while other areas where services will be disrupted include Dorking in Surrey, Crewe in Cheshire, between Lancaster and Carlisle and between Peterborough and Ely.

On Easter Sunday, Virgin Trains between London Euston and Birmingham New Street or Crewe will run between Northampton and Birmingham New Street or Crewe only. Until 10am, replacement buses will operate between London Euston and Milton Keynes Central and Northampton and after 10am replacement buses will operate between London Euston and Hemel Hempstead, Milton Keynes Central, Northampton, with an hourly train service running between Hemel Hempstead and Milton Keynes Central.

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Classic family drama is chosen by theatre company

A PLAY following a wealthy family and their experiences between the First and Second World Wars will be brought to the stage by a drama group.

Stourbridge Theatre Company will perform JB Priestley's *Time and the Conways* from today (Thursday) to Saturday at Stourbridge Town Hall, in Market Street, at 7.30pm.

The beginning of the story takes place during a single night in 1919 – the birthday of one of the Conway daughters Kay and then fast-forwards to same room in 1937.

Joined

The company's Barbara French said rehearsals for the production had been taking place since January.

"A lot of new people have joined the group recently so for a lot of the

performers it will be their first production for the company," she said.

"It is a very gripping play and we are looking forward to staging the production," she said.

The piece is widely regarded as one of Priestley's best 'Time Plays', a series of works for theatre which deal with different concepts of time.

Tickets cost £9, £7 concessions, from the French Deli in Coventry Street, Stourbridge. Or call 0870 320 7000 or visit www.stourbridgetheatrecompany.org.uk website.

Stourbridge Theatre Company was founded in 1937 and stages three plays a year. The group will perform Noel Coward's *Hay Fever* from September 3 to 5, then family favourite *The Wind in the Willows* from November 26 to 28.



Georgia Sanders, Dan Price and Naomi Plaice star in *Time and the Conways* at Stourbridge Town Hall

Police cleared over serious head injury

AN INVESTIGATION has cleared police officers of any wrongdoing after a man suffered a serious head injury while being restrained.

Officers were called to an address in Hockley, Birmingham, following reports of a domestic incident. After being restrained, the 59-year-old man lost consciousness and was taken to Queen Elizabeth Hospital, subsequently receiving ongoing medical treatment for his head injury.

Proportionate

The incident, in June 2013, was referred to the Independent Police Complaints Commission.

An statement said: "The investigation found that, on the balance of probabilities, the actions taken by the police officers in their initial interaction with the man and the use of restraint was proportionate and necessary."

"The investigation found no evidence against either of the officers in relation to the injuries the man sustained and therefore no case to answer for misconduct was found against any of the officers involved."

Old school pals rally at surprise birthday do

THEY are old school friends who come together for an annual reunion to reminisce about days in the classroom and playground.

And this year's commemoration brought special significance as the friends rallied around a classmate for his 60th birthday bash.

Philip Priest has been battling after being diagnosed with dementia and Parkinson's and his friends wanted to make it a special occasion in his honour.

Mr Priest, a former vending machine engineer, first started noticing his symptoms around seven years ago, and is now in full-time care.

The friends organised the party at Jubilee Gardens care home in Coseley.

Alan Carpenter, a school friend of Mr Priest who organised the event, said: "Me, Phillip and another one of the organisers, Andrew Cope, were all in the same year at High Park School, now Ridgewood, in Wollaston, from 1966 to 1971.

"Around 20 years ago a few of us decided to put on a school reunion, and we have been doing it once a year ever since.

"Since we have all recently turned 60, we wanted to put something special on for Philip.

"He had no idea we were planning it, not a clue, but he was so happy."

Around 17 former school pals were on hand to help Mr Priest celebrate in style.

"The care home were fantastic, they were all so accommodating and helpful,"

By Charlie Benton

Mr Carpenter said. "They were welcoming and put out a spread which was lovely.

"We had around 17 people turn up which was more than we were expecting.

"Once everybody who comes to the reunions found out we were doing it they all wanted to come along."

Mr Carpenter said Mr Priest found it difficult to deal with his illness once his symptoms started to show.

"He was always very fit," Mr Carpenter said. "He joined the Navy not long after we left school and served on the Ark Royal.

"He took part in a lot of exercises and was always at peak fitness. He had to pack his job in around ten years ago."

Despite this, Mr Carpenter said Mr Priest, or 'Dibble', as he is known to his friends, came into his own at the party.

"He really loved it," Mr Carpenter said. "And the girls that were there really loved him. He was always a bit of a ladies man, so he really enjoyed it."

"After everybody had gone he told me it had been a complete surprise, he really enjoyed himself."

Brinton's carpets on cruise ship Britannia

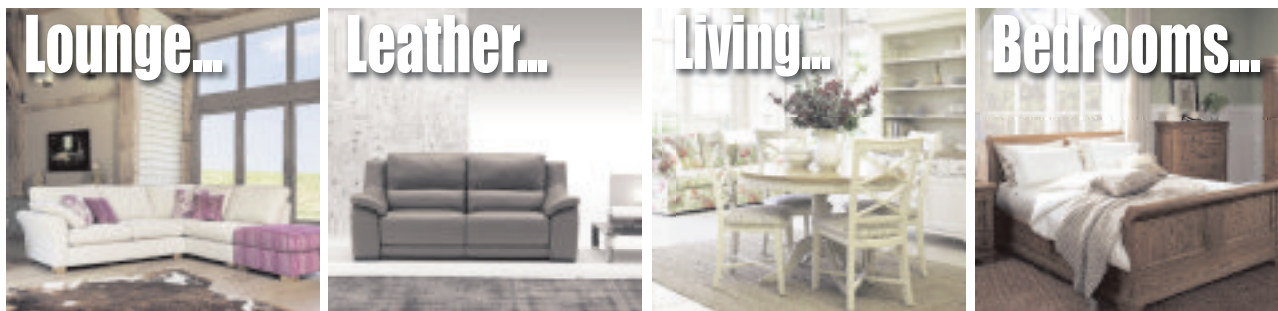
WHEN Britain's biggest ever cruise ship was officially named by Her Majesty The Queen last week, there will have been a thrill of pride for workers at a Kidderminster factory.

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The carpeting was specifically designed and made for use on all the public areas of the £473 million P&O Britannia.

The 3,600 passenger vessel is the largest cruise ship designed for the British holiday market.

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Catfish singer reveals origin of name



Soon to rock a full house in Brum, Catfish and the Bottlemen, whose name was inspired by an Australian busker YOUNG Welsh garage rockers Catfish and the Bottlemen have sold out their gig in Birmingham this month. A full house is guaranteed at The Institute in Digbeth on Saturday, March 28, when the four-piece from Llandudno will be playing their furious but melodic guitar rock, as heard on hit debut album *The Balcony*. Singer and guitarist Van McCann has revealed where the inspiration for the band's strange name came from. It goes back to his childhood in Australia, where his Liverpoolian parents were travelling. "My first memory of music is being sat outside a cafe watching a guy play a washing line with bottles on it. He was called Catfish the Bottlemoan. So I thought it was apt to name the band after him... I really wish I hadn't. Try telling a drunk guy that name for the fifteenth time." They release new single *Homesick* on April 13.

Vic and Bob on the road

COMEDY duo Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer are bringing their first tour in 20 years to Birmingham.

The pair who built on the legacy of Monty Python and Spike Milligan to reinvent surreal comedy in the 1990s are still pushing the boundaries with their subver-

sive sit-com *House of Fools* on BBC2.

Their *Big Night Out*, *Smell of Reeves & Mortimer* and alternative quiz show *Shooting Stars* helped change the face of comedy. Meanwhile, Vic's crooning took him to the top of the charts singing *Dizzy* with Black Country band *The Wonder Stuff* in 1991. That was the same year Vic and

Bob hosted *The Wonder Stuff* concert at Bescot Stadium.

New show *25 Years of Reeves & Mortimer: The Poignant Years* will be staged at Birmingham Symphony Hall on November 20 with an extra date at the Barclaycard Arena announced for November 23. Bob added: "Be warned, I will be not be wearing a toupé."



Vic and Bob in action

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Stylish musical Top Hat was 'delivered with panache and polish by the whole ensemble'

The incident of Walsh's banjo gig is no accident

Dan Walsh

The Woodman Folk Club, Kingswinford
DAN Walsh looks like a student but plays like an old pro. His performance is relaxed, confident, flawless and incredibly entertaining.

The son of Stafford slaps his banjo with gusto but you can hardly see his hands moving however, you can hear the wonderful sound he makes.

The pretty much full Woodman was already fairly hot but Walsh soon turned the heat up a notch.

He is very much at ease on stage and lashed straight into Time to Stay which is the first track from his new album Incidents & Accidents, following this up he went with Four Tunes, where if you had any doubts about his ability or how good banjo music can be this should have dispelled them.

Walsh has a very friendly manner and has a natural and easy rapport with his audience.

His new album showcases his talent pretty well but you have to see him live to

REVIEWS

really appreciate his skill as a musician, especially his singing.

One of the highlights of the show was Whiplash Reel where he plays what is essentially a classical Indian raga-style which he fuses with a Celtic sound but makes his five-string instrument sound like the sitar.

Walsh has a reputation for being among the best banjo players in the world and you watch him on stage getting lost in his music and you see why people think that.

Throughout the night he kept the audience enthralled with his reels, bluegrass and blues banjo giving a real flavour of his new album.

Not forgetting his first instrument towards the end of the set he brought out his version of Paul Simon's You Can Call Me Al from where the title of his album comes.

Danny Farragher

Glitter & glamour aplenty

Top Hat

Birmingham Hippodrome
I MAY have come fresh from the office but such was the infectious style of Top Hat's opening night I felt as if I too was wearing a feather-trimmed ballgown.

There was glitter and glamour aplenty in the audience alone with long dresses and white ties on parade with the odd set of tails and even some elbow-length gloves and tiaras adding to the tableau.

Shimmering we may have been but we were no match for the sheer beauty of the show. The dresses, the art deco set, the hair, the stoles — and the cream of Irving Berlin's repertoire.

Not one, not two, but more than half a dozen classics, delivered with panache and polish by the whole ensemble.

Singing and dancing was superb and the delivery of the all-essential American-style wisecracks spot-on. The story of love sought against a crisscross of mistaken identities is engaging and fun and understandably brought the audience to its feet.

Alan Burkitt as Jerry and Charlotte Gooch as Dale were perfect as the paramours, but mention but also be made of the singing skills and chest of Sebastian Torkia as surprise love rival Beddini.

Also take a bow John Conroy whose comical man-servant Bates was an absolute joy.

Sarah Cowen-Strong

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Included in the trip is a boat ride to Cannobio, before continuing into Switzerland to the chic resort of Locarno, to explore the town and take in the highlights of the historic centre. After some free time board the narrow gauge Centovalli train for a spectacularly scenic ride as it winds its way through wild, romantic landscapes and mountain cascades. A visit to Lake Como is also on the itinerary with free time in Como town, which is renowned for its lakeside parks and grand hotels.

Climb the foothills of the Alps to reach The Matterhorn, to see it in all its glory, truly one of life's 'wow' moments. A day is spent in the lakeside village of Orta San Giulio, a haven from mass tourism and the only 'must see' sight is the village itself.

The final excursion is a visit to the monumental statue of San Carlo Borromeo, it stands at the peak of a hill and commands wonderful views across Lake Maggiore and the surrounding countryside.

INFO

- Return flights
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Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

Hampton Court Palace

Two days departing June 20

★ **PRICE FROM £119**

- Return coach travel
- Overnight half-board accommodation
- Entrance to Hampton Court Palace and Gardens
- Visit to Royal Greenwich
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

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Fetish club in fresh move to overcome objections

Locomotives steaming in for SVR gala

Charity cycle ride is inspired by cancer toll



Dean Sabin, of Oldbury, is cycling solo from his home to Skegness to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support

A FUNDRAISER who lost two relatives to cancer within days of each other will be cycling 115 miles for charity.

Dean Sabin, aged 37, is aiming to raise at least £1,000 for Macmillan Cancer Support when he pedals to Skegness. He lost both his aunt Marie Weston and mother-in-law Lorraine White to the disease within two days of each other.

Seaside

Father-of-two Mr Sabin, of Eva Road, Oldbury will be combining his trip to the Lincolnshire seaside town with a visit to his brother Ronald Sabin, 42, who lives there and he will also celebrate his 38th birthday on June 14, the day after he completes his journey.

"My brother lives in Skegness and I have always wanted to cycle down there and this is as good a year as any," he said.

To donate to his appeal, visit his Facebook page or phone him on 07411 284106.

Car park delays work on Black Country ice rink

WORK on a huge ice rink for the Black Country could begin by the end of the year.

It has been more than a year since plans to create an ice rink on the site of the Queens Square car park in West Bromwich first emerged. But Mike Petrouis, chief executive of Planet Ice, says the plans are still very much alive.

He said the company would lodge the plans with Sandwell Council once it had arranged for the multi-storey car park to be demolished.

The original plan was for the demolition of the car park to start last spring with the development of the ice rink to begin in the autumn and the building to be open by the end of 2015.

Mr Petrouis said: "The car park needs bulldozing and that is all we are waiting for. The onus is on us to get it done."

"The scheme is still on as far as we're concerned and there is no reason to think the council aren't encouraging it."

Mr Petrouis said he expected the delay over the demolition of the car park to be resolved in the next two months.

Then, if the plans are approved by councillors, he said work would start by the end of this year on the 1,500 seater ice rink, creating at least 100 jobs.

A FETISH club has renewed its bid to open in Dudley and now planning chiefs are backing the scheme, months after the original was blocked by councillors.

Council planners said their decision had been made without making 'a moral judgement on the nature of the club'.

The Valhalla Club would cater for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community, disabled people and the vulnerable, the council was told.

It would be based in premises in Dock Lane, opposite Dudley Leisure Centre.

Clive Thomson, owner of the club, has lodged a fresh application for a change of use for the building.

By Charlie Benton

His first bid to open the club was rejected by councillors in December. But since then a separate committee granted a licence for the club to sell alcohol and for live and recorded music.

The previous application had referred to the venue as a 'private members club' but the current bid states it would be a 'social club and photographic studio'.

A report will go before members of the council's planning committee this week. It says: "The purpose of this report is to assess the suitability of the proposed use from a land use planning perspective and not to consider a moral judgement on the nature of the club."

"This proposed development will involve the re-use of an otherwise

redundant building which has been shown to be no longer viable for further industrial use.

"On this basis, it is considered that the proposed change of use is acceptable in this location in compliance with the relevant policies."

But the application has so far received more than 30 objections with the main issues being the location close to the leisure centre, religious buildings, a primary school and homes.

The club is finished inside and is waiting to open.

Mr Thomson said: "We have gone through licensing and scrutiny committees all without issue. The planning department and officers are on board with us, it is now just the committee, and I believe the issues there are completely personal."

"They don't understand what this club is."

A CELEBRATION of the golden age of steam will kick off the Severn Valley Railway's 50th anniversary year.

The Spring Steam Gala will see four visiting locomotives star alongside the railway's own historical engines. The event, from tomorrow (Friday) to Sunday, will also mark the launch of a golden jubilee exhibition.

Headlining the visiting engine line-up and making its SVR debut will be No 90733 Dub Dee, which will travel from the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway in West Yorkshire. Dub Dee was built in 1945 and was shipped to Europe to aid troop and supply movements on the continent.

After the war, it found work in the Netherlands and Sweden, before being returning to the UK in 1973.

Lindsay Kendrick, of the SVR, said: "The former Great Western Railway resident No L92 returns to join the celebrations from the South Devon Railway. The locomotive used to work in the London Underground tunnels until 1969. Completing the star line-up will be No 1054, built in 1888, which will also be the oldest engine in service at the gala."

The SVR's home fleet of locomotives will be running an intensive timetable on the scenic route between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth.

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Dinosaur display is new at safari park

THE Land of the Living Dinosaurs attraction is a new exhibit which will be roaring into life at West Midland Safari Park this weekend.

From velociraptors to a giant tyrannosaurus rex, it will be like stepping into Jurassic Park.

Loud growling and jungle noises greet visitors to the attraction which will open its doors near Bewdley on Saturday.

The walk-through exhibit, situated between the sealion pool and the reptile house, gives families the chance to get up close to the prehistoric creatures and discover more about what life was like when dinosaurs ruled the Earth.

There is even a chance for young visitors to search for dinosaur eggs.

Two fans injured in station violence

TWO men were seriously hurt after being caught up in trouble before a West Bromwich Albion match.

The men from Dudley and Cradley Heath, both aged 52, were assaulted as a train pulled into the Hawthorns station before Albion's game against Southampton on February 28.

One of the victims sustained a double fracture to his jaw and had to undergo corrective surgery. The other was left with a gash on the head and a black eye. One of the men was attacked on the train as it arrived into the station. The second man was assaulted on the station platform.

British Transport Police are appealing for information on 0800 40 50 40.

Digital autopsies set to become norm in borough

DIGITAL autopsies using scanners could replace traditional 'invasive' procedures completely in Sandwell.

Last year the borough became only the third area in the country to install a £1.2 million digital autopsy suite at Sandwell Valley Crematorium.

Now the council will decide whether to allocate funds to make digital autopsies the preferred method. If the proposal is approved, the council could foot the bill for each digital autopsy carried out at the request of the Black Country Coroner.

Currently, digital autopsies are only carried out at the request of the family of the deceased, who then pay the bill. But if the proposal is passed the authority would pay for digital autopsies the same way it funds traditional ones.

The cost of each autopsy works out at around £500 whereas the average cost of a traditional post mortem is close to £1,000.

Leader of Sandwell Council Councillor Darren Cooper said the proposal will avoid what he called a 'two-tier system'.

He said: "It is always the coroner's call, as he is the professional, he makes the call as to what the best procedure is."

"What we did want to avoid was a two-tier system. Some people may not be able to afford a digital autopsy and it is not fair for them to not be able to have it as an option."

"This means that the

By Charlie Benton

council will simply pay for digital autopsies, if the coroner thinks they are superior, the same way it pays for traditional ones."

The digital autopsy suite offers a less invasive way to carry out post mortems, using a CT scanner which means the coroner is not required to carry out a full autopsy.

Since the suite was installed at the crematorium in October, 20 digital autopsies have been carried out by Black Country Coroner Zafar Siddique. Of those, two required a further traditional autopsy.

A report submitted to cabinet by officers said: "As a result of the leadership demonstrated by the coroner and his desire to embrace innovative working to improve service delivery for the bereaved, use of the digital autopsy facility in Sandwell has become established and is becoming the standard operating procedure."

Students build on their learning skills



Students with assistant site manager Hayley Chilton and senior site manager Stuart Stokes

SCHOOLCHILDREN tried their hand at bricklaying as part of an apprenticeship showcase at a housing estate under construction in Smethwick.

The £25 million Windmill Heights development is being created by developer Barratt Homes with support from Sandwell Council, creating 228 properties.

Twenty students from Holly Lodge High School spent part of the day on site marking National Apprenticeship Week.

The aim of the visit, organised by Barratt Homes, was to demonstrate to the students the different skills involved in housebuilding. Apprentice, Mitchell James, 17, from Halesowen, is working as an apprentice at Windmill Heights.

"I like the practical side of the work and combining work and learning both on site and in college," he said. "I decided to take an apprenticeship because I thought this would be a good way to get started in the industry. I've really learned a lot so far."

He hopes to run his own business one day and he is currently studying for his Diploma in Carpentry at Stourbridge College.

Dance star to take her final bow in Brum

DANCE superstar Sylvie Guillem will be making her final performances in the UK in Birmingham.

The 50-year-old French former star ballerina of the Paris Opera and The Royal Ballet in London is planning to retire from performance.

She is to be honoured for her extraordinary career at the Olivier Awards next month.

Since 2006 the Paris-born dancer has specialised in contemporary dance.

At Birmingham Hippodrome on September 8 and 9, Guillem performs two new works including a solo by choreographer Akram Khan, and a pas de deux with Italian dancer Emanuela Montanari, choreographed by Russell Maliphant who collaborated with her on the award-winning Push.

Birmingham Hippodrome chief executive Stuart Griffiths said "Sylvie Guillem's performances have been major highlights of both the 2012 and 2014 International Dance Festivals so I am honoured that Ms Guillem has chosen Birmingham Hippodrome as the venue for her last ever performances in the UK. Dance lovers across the West Midlands and beyond have the unique chance of seeing these final performances here in Birmingham. We expect huge demand for tickets."

Tickets are priced £15 to £75 and can be booked online or on 0844 338 5000 from today (Thursday).

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Black Country leaders veto Greater Brum 'Metro Mayor'

Pledge move for protecting more children

Cancer gave Sadie the courage to set sail



Sadie Windmill on her yacht — she says the experience of having cancer gave her the courage to change her life

SHE is the school teacher who has taken to the seas to sail her boat like a heroine from an adventure novel. But Sadie Windmill has succeeded in an even greater challenge — battling a serious form of cancer.

The 44-year-old former Kingswinford assistant head-teacher was stunned after being diagnosed with cancer more than two years ago.

Sadie remembers her early concerns and visits to the doctor with a swollen neck which was diagnosed as mumps. However, the problem persisted and after a consultant backed up the doctor's opinion, she decided to go private and see a head and neck surgeon.

The surgeon, John Watkinson, based at the Priory Hospital, Edgbaston, ordered tests and the next day confirmed that Sadie had chronic lymphocytic leukaemia.

"We were stunned. Having never been really ill in my life it was such a shocker and took a while to accept it all," said Sadie, who was assistant head at the Crestwood School, Kingswinford.

She went to see consultant haemato-oncologist Dr Prem-
ini Mahendra — or Prem as the couple came to know her.

Chemotherapy

Life was turned upside down for Sadie and her husband Jules as she was forced to undergo an intensive course of chemotherapy.

"Life became a whirlwind of operations, tubes, needles and hospital appointments," she said. "I had six chemotherapy treatments in six months. I won't lie, it was tough, but we were determined to remain positive throughout."

"At the end of the first cycle, the lumps were no longer visible to the eye. I also was very proactive, exercising, getting out in the fresh air, meditating and changing my diet totally," she added.

The three month tests showed that all the tumours were gone and three months later Dr Mahendra announced that Sadie was in full remission.

After they received the happy news, the couple thought they must do something life changing to celebrate the landmark moment. They wanted to see the world so boarded their yacht, with their two dogs Tinker and Scrappy, and sailed around France, Spain, Gibraltar, Morocco and Portugal.

"Every day is different. We drop anchor, catch fish, go kayaking, swim off the back of the boat, have a barbecue and walk the dogs," she said.

But the couple still keep in regular touch with Prem, returning for tests every six months.

Sadie said: "If I had never had cancer, I would never have been brave enough to do what we are doing now. We love the way of life we now lead with lots of sun, relaxation and a Mediterranean diet."

"With wi-fi and Skype we probably see more of family than ever before."

"I would never wish to have had cancer but without it I would never be leading such a fulfilled, adventurous life."

BLACK Country leaders are demanding that the idea of a 'Metro Mayor' for the West Midlands be ruled out in talks on a combined authority.

They say the joint body, which will oversee regeneration, transport and skills, should be called 'West Midlands Combined Authority' — ruling out completely any suggestion of a Greater Birmingham.

Councillor Darren Cooper, leader of Sandwell Council, has written on behalf of the Black Country to his equivalents in Birmingham, Coventry and Solihull to set out the 'red lines' when working together.

Wolverhampton, Sandwell, Dudley, Walsall and Birmingham councils have already agreed to create a joint

By Daniel Wainwright

authority but the door was left open to Coventry and Solihull.

There are concerns that if the name Greater Birmingham is used it will give the impression that it is the second city that is in charge, rather than an equal partnership with the neighbouring cities and boroughs.

Referendum

Chancellor George Osborne continues to float the idea of a West Midlands regional mayor, despite Birmingham having already voted in a referendum to not have one.

The combined authority would allow the councils to work together on projects that benefit the whole of the West Midlands and avoid having to compete with each other for ever-shrinking

pots of Government funding. In the letter Councillor Cooper says: "With regard to the notion of a Metro Mayor, the Black Country Councils would like to use the following wording in our communications: 'A Metro or regional Mayor is not part of the solution for the governance structure of the West Midlands and will not be a part of any agreements to create a combined authority.'"

"Secondly, with regard to the name of the combined authority we have to think about what will be acceptable to the individual councils and the residents of the localities."

"Black Country councils believe that the name should be 'West Midlands Combined Authority'."

"We would urge colleagues to support this so that we can give clear direction to officers in regard to the name and mayor issues."

COUNCIL bosses are joining forces to call on people to make a personal pledge to help tackle Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton councils, along with West Midlands Police were supporting the first national CSE awareness day, held yesterday (Wednesday).

Abuse

Organised by charity National Working Group Network, the day was aiming to encourage everyone to think about and speak out against such abuse.

The seven regional councils, the police and partner organisations are working together to raise the profile of CSE and launched

the See Me, Hear Me campaign last June.

Councillor Tim Crumpton, cabinet member for children's services at Dudley, said: "Child sexual exploitation is a horrendous abuse crime, which has been hidden for far too long. Through our See Me, Hear Me campaign we have been increasing people's understanding of CSE and how to spot the warning signs, so the national awareness day is a great way to spread the message further."

For more information see the www.nwgnetwork.org website. The network is supported by BBC Children In Need, Comic Relief and The Bromley Trust.

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Paloma is back for Arena concert

BRIT award-winning singer Paloma Faith will headline Birmingham's Barclaycard Arena tonight (Thursday) during the biggest tour of her career.

She had hoped to record the next Bond theme but now knows that she won't. Last month she Tweeted: "Dear @007 I've been waiting patiently to be able to sing the next theme. I was BORN to do it. Please don't give it to someone else again!"

However, she subsequently found out that she'd missed out on the chance to sing on Spectre.

"I think now because of the whole cool factor thing I'm never going to get it, and if you ask for something in this business, you don't get it," she said.

Step into Boogie Shoes for Fever

TONY Manero will be strutting his stuff again when the hero of Saturday Night Fever will be bringing his jive talkin' and smooth disco moves to Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre.

Based on the hit movie, the musical filled with disco hits returns to the dancefloors of 1970s Brooklyn.

As Tony, Danny Bayne is getting used to filling John Travolta's shoes after starring as Danny Zuko in Grease in the West End, after winning TV show Grease Is The Word.

The fever continues at the Alex until Saturday night.

Theatres mark centenary of American playwright's birth

Frozen a first for ice magic

MAGIC! Coming soon to Birmingham's Genting Arena is a show that is guaranteed to be a hit with all Disney fans.

Disney On Ice presents Magical Ice Festival, the first to feature the much-loved sisters Anna and Elsa from the number one animated film of all time, Disney's Frozen.

The ice show is due to run in Birmingham from April 1-5 as part of a nationwide tour. Due to its popularity 20 extra performance have been added.

It will see Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse bring the most magical moments from across the Disney kingdom to UK audiences.

And in a new twist on fairytale fun, comical segments from everyone's favorite Disney characters set the scene for the show-stopping on-ice stories of princesses Ariel, Rapunzel and Belle.



Sparkling – Elsa set to thrill the Disney fans

THEATRE fans looking for plays to challenge the intellect are being well served this spring.

Following The Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Night-time at Wolverhampton Grand (it's back at Birmingham Hippodrome in the summer), Tom Stoppard's time-travelling play about historical fact and fiction, Arcadia, is at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre from Monday to Saturday.

Set at a Derbyshire country house in the modern day and 200 years earlier, it finds a scholar researching an episode in Lord Byron's life involving a precocious young lady and Byron's friend Septimus Hodge.

The 19th century scenes feature 20-year-old screen actress Dakotia Blue Richards, from Skins and The Golden Compass, making her stage debut as Thomasina Coverly.

Meanwhile, there seems to be an Arthur Miller revival with the great American playwright's A View From The Bridge coming to Wolverhampton, All My Sons at Birmingham and Death Of A Salesman revived by the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-upon-Avon. All explore the idea of 'the American Dream' and its reality.

At the Grand from Tuesday to Saturday, the Touring Consortium Theatre mark the centenary of Miller's birth with A View From The Bridge.

Brooklyn

Set in the 1950s in the tough New York district of Brooklyn, it tells of an Italian-American family rocked by the arrival of two young male cousins from Sicily.

At Birmingham Rep from Tuesday to Saturday, All My Sons looks at the immediate aftermath of the Second World War for a couple whose son is declared missing in action. Miller's first success is revived by Talawa, the UK's primary black-led touring theatre company.

Meanwhile, Anthony Sher stars as Willy Loman, who sees his hopes evaporate after a life of hard work in Death Of A Salesman, in repertoire at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre from March 26 to May 2.



Dakotia Blue Richards in Arcadia

The production is directed by RSC artistic director Gregory Doran and also features Harriet Walter and Alex Hassell.

Nikolai Foster's production of Jonathan Harvey's 20-year-old play Beautiful Thing is coming to Birmingham Hippodrome's The Patrick Centre, prior to a West End run.

An urban love story between two young men on an inner city housing estate, and revolving around their relationship with a loud-mouthed neighbour, it is staged from March 30 to April 11.

The cast includes former EastEnders actors Charlie Brooks (she played dangerous Janine Butcher) and Thomas Law, and Sam Jackson from Skins and Hollyoaks.

McCartney tour to include Brum

SIR Paul McCartney has announced his first UK shows in three years – including a gig in Birmingham.

The former Beatle will play the Barclaycard Arena on May 27 and also London's O2 and Liverpool the same month as part of a European tour.

The set list will include tracks from throughout his career including songs from his most recent album, 2013's New.

The gigs will be his first UK concerts since he played the Royal Albert Hall in 2012.

Sir Paul said: "It's always great when you get to play in your home country. It's been a little while since I've performed here so we're planning a few surprises."

Slam Dunk punk flim acts named

THE final set of bands have been announced for this year's Slam Dunk festival, being held at three locations in May.

The festival, which takes place over the bank holiday weekend at venues in Wolverhampton, Leeds and Hatfield is to return to the city's Civic Halls on May 25 with various stages for a line-up of more than 50 punk rock bands.

Architects, Finch, Set it Off and We Are The Ocean have been announced as additions to this year's line up, which is headlined by You Me At Six.

For the full line up visit slamdunkmusic.com and tickets are priced at £42.90.

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CHOICE



Richard III: The Princes in the Tower (Channel 4, 9.00pm)
In the week of the reburial of Richard III at Leicester Cathedral, this drama-documentary explores the events of 1483, when he put 12-year-old Edward V and younger brother Richard of Shrewsbury into the Tower of London. Weeks later, he pronounced himself king and the boys were never seen again. For more than 500 years it has been thought by some that the monarch killed his own nephews to take the throne, while others believe no crime took place – and that the youngsters lived anonymously into old age. Hearing from experts including David Starkey and Philippa Gregory, the programme tests the competing theories.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Football Focus. **12.00** BBC News; Weather. **12.10** Live Six Nations Rugby Union. Italy v Wales (Kick-off 12.30pm). The final day of the championship gets under way with this clash at the Stadio Olimpico, as Wales look for a third away win of the tournament. **2.25** Live Six Nations Rugby Union. Scotland v Ireland (Kick-off 2.30pm). Coverage of the second of today's three fixtures comes from Murrayfield, as the nations play their final match of the campaign. **4.30** Live Six Nations Rugby Union. England v France (Kick-off 5.00pm). This year's championship reaches a climax at Twickenham, where the final standings will be decided. **7.00** BBC News. **7.10** Regional Programme. **7.15** The Voice UK. Emma Willis and Marvin Humes present the first live round of the singing contest, in which the 12 remaining acts perform for a place in the semi-final. After all three acts in each team have performed, Tom Jones, Will.i.am, Rita Ora and Ricky Wilson will choose one to progress straight through to the next stage of the competition – leaving the remaining two on each team to go head to head in a public vote. **9.15** The National Lottery Live. Gaby Roslin pushes the buttons to reveal the results of the Lotto and Thunderball draws. **9.25** The Voice UK Results. Emma Willis and Marvin Humes announce the result of the public vote to decide which four acts will be going home – leaving Tom Jones, Will.i.am, Rita Ora and Ricky Wilson with just two each for next week's semi-final. **10.00** BBC News; Weather. **10.20** Match of the Day. Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League clashes, including Newcastle United v Arsenal and Manchester City v West Bromwich Albion. National Lottery Update. **11.45** The Football League Show. Manish Bhasin presents highlights and all the goals from the latest fixtures. **1.05** Film: Virus. (1999) A salvage tug crew boards an abandoned Russian vessel and encounters a deadly alien life form composed of pure energy. Sci-fi thriller, with Jamie Lee Curtis. **2.35** Weather for the Week Ahead. **2.40** BBC News.

BBC2

7.10 Film: Safari. (1956) **8.40** Six Nations Rewind. (R) **9.40** The Fred Dibnah Story. (R) **10.10** Fred Dibnah's Magnificent Monuments. (R) **10.40** The Nature of Britain. (R) **11.30** A Taste of Britain. **12.00** A Taste of Britain. **12.30** Alec Guinness: Talking Pictures. (R) **1.10** Film: The Man in the White Suit. (1951) Satirical Ealing comedy, with Alec Guinness. **2.35** Film: Flight of the Navigator. (1986) Sci-fi adventure, with Joey Cramer. **4.00** Escape to the Country. (R) **4.30** Final Score. **5.15** Flog It! **6.15** Gardeners' World. Monty Don tries to revive the fortunes of the once-popular chrysanthemum, while Joe Swift has suggestions for viewers thinking of giving their garden a bit of a spring revamp. (R) **6.45** Kew on a Plate. Chef Raymond Blanc and broadcaster Kate Humble spend a year at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Richmond upon Thames, south-west London, to try to re-establish the long-lost fruit and vegetable plots that once provided produce for the royal table. In the first episode, spring has arrived and Raymond harvests rhubarb and plants asparagus crowns, while Kate discovers how war with France turned Britain into a nation of potato eaters. (R) **7.45** Dad's Army. Captain Mainwaring initiates a recruitment campaign, but makes the mistake of leaving Wilson in charge of the poster. (R) **8.15** Murder on the Victorian Railway. Drama-documentary examining the death of banker Thomas Briggs in July 1864, which was the first murder to be committed on a British train. (R) **9.15** Film: Now Is Good. (2012) Premiere. A 17-year-old girl is diagnosed with terminal leukaemia, and decides to make the most of the few months she has left, working her way through a list of life-changing experiences that most people have during their teenage years. Meanwhile, her parents and brother each try to cope with the impending loss in their own way. Drama, starring Dakota Fanning, Olivia Williams and Paddy Considine. **10.50** Film: Girl with a Pearl Earring. (2003) Period drama, with Scarlett Johansson and Tom Wilkinson. **12.25** Film: Michael Collins. (1996) **2.25** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Bottom Knockers Street. **6.10** Bottom Knockers Street. (R) **6.20** Bottom Knockers Street. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan. (R) **7.00** Animals. (R) **7.10** Sooty. (R) **7.25** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: Nerds & Monsters. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Adventure Time. **8.30** Scrambled!: Horrid Henry. **8.50** Scrambled!: Hulk and the Agents of Smash. **9.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **10.20** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **11.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.30** ITV News; Weather. **12.35** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **1.40** Film: Murder, She Wrote: The Celtic Riddle. (2003) Mystery, starring Angela Lansbury. **3.30** Secrets from the Sky. (R) **4.00** Off Their Rockers. (R) **4.30** Big Star's Little Star. (R) **5.30** Regional Programme; Weather. **5.45** ITV News; Weather. **6.00** You've Been Framed! Harry Hill narrates a comical selection of mishaps filmed by viewers, featuring everything from cute kids and crazy animals to pranks and painful-looking accidents. (R) **7.00** Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway. Stephen Mulhern finds himself at the mercy of the Georgie duo as they once again go undercover, Ashley Roberts oversees this week's round of Ant v Dec, and the guest announcer is this year's Oscars host Neil Patrick Harris, getting in some practice before he takes the reins of the American version of Saturday Night Takeaway. Plus, the Supercomputer hits the road again and a member of the studio audience plays to win the contents of a commercial break. **8.25** You're Back in the Room. Five contestants team up to complete four challenges, including serving pints to Coronation Street stars past and present. Phillip Schofield hosts the hypnotism game show. **9.25** The Jonathan Ross Show. Russell Crowe talks about The Water Diviner, Elizabeth Hurley discusses The Royals and Lily James reveals what it was like to play Cinderella. **10.30** ITV News; Weather. **10.45** Film: Burn After Reading. (2008) Two gym employees get hold of the manuscript for a CIA agent's tell-all book and try to sell the secrets it contains. The Coen brothers' comedy, with Brad Pitt. **12.30** Jackpot247. **3.00** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **3.45** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.05 Trans World Sport. **7.05** Cycling: Revolution Series. **8.00** The Morning Line. **9.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **9.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **10.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **10.35** Frasier. (R) **11.05** Frasier. (R) **11.35** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **1.00** Rude(ish) Tube. **1.30** Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Newbury and Kelso. **4.10** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.40** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.15** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.45** Come Dine with Me. (R) **6.10** The Simpsons. (R) **6.40** Channel 4 News. **7.05** Selling Out Britain. Will Hutton argues that business leaders and politicians are selling off some of Britain's best companies for a quick and easy profit, creating a dumbed-down, low-wage Britain. **8.00** The World's Weirdest Weather. Icebergs explode into thousands of pieces in Antarctica, locals film a rare snowstorm in the Saudi Arabian desert, and more than 10,000 seabirds are killed off the north-west coast of America when storms churn up algae in the waters, creating deadly sea foam. In Canada, tourists witness a full-circle rainbow, and a firefighter in Texas is caught up in a wave of hail so large that it shuts down the highway. **9.00** Richard III: The Princes in the Tower. In the week of the reburial of Richard III at Leicester Cathedral, this drama-documentary explores the events of 1483, when he put 12-year-old Edward V and younger brother Richard of Shrewsbury into the Tower of London. Weeks later, he pronounced himself king and the boys were never seen again. For more than 500 years it has been thought by some that the monarch killed his own nephews to take the throne, while others believe no crime took place – and that the youngsters lived anonymously into old age. **10.00** Film: Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter. (2012) Premiere. Fantasy thriller, starring Benjamin Walker and Dominic Cooper. **12.05** Alan Carr: Chatty Man. (R) **1.05** Film: Stakeout. (1987) **3.05** Hollyoaks. (R) **5.15** Kirstie's Vintage Gems. (R) **5.30** The Common Denominator. (R) **5.55** NFL: Rush Zone.

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.10** SpongeBob SquarePants. **10.45** Film: Alpha and Omega. (2010) **12.25** Film: Columbo: The Conspirators. (1978) Detective drama, starring Peter Falk. **2.25** Holiday Love Rats Exposed. (R) **3.25** The Woman with 40 Cats – and Other Pet Hoarders. (R) **4.25** GPS: Behind Closed Doors. (R) **5.25** The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (R) **6.20** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. Mike Altonby and Terry Jones repossess debtors' cars in Cheshire and Liverpool. (R) **7.10** Police Interceptors. A foul-mouthed pensioner pushes Barry's patience to the limit, Sarah gives a bad-boy biker an early birthday present and Jim's Audi S3 is outlasted by a car 30 years its senior. (R) **8.00** 5 News Weekend. **8.05** NCIS. A marine's teeth and fingerprints are found in a pickpocket's stolen purse, but the team discovers the real target may have been his ex-girlfriend, a skilled player of computer games. (R) **9.00** NCIS. The agents learn one of their former investigative assistants has been murdered, and had been selling information about how to rob a warehouse full of valuable possessions belonging to a woman convicted of fraud. As the case proceeds, Tony becomes infatuated with the new leader of another team, who apparently returns his feelings. (R) **10.00** CSI: Crime Scene Investigation. DB and the team investigate the murder of an inmate at Clark County Jail and learn the victim was working as an informant for the district attorney and the FBI. **10.55** Law & Order: Special Victims Unit. Benson and Stabler investigate when a woman appears on a family's doorstep claiming to be their missing daughter, and says she had been abducted and kept as a sex slave. (R) **11.50** True Crimes: The First 72 Hours. Investigating whether a movie called The Great Despairers motivated an act of violence in which a teenager's father, mother and autistic sister were brutally murdered. (R) **12.15** SuperCasino. **3.10** The Benefits Estate. (R) **4.00** The Gadget Show. (R) **4.50** Make It Big. (R) **5.15** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.40** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 World's Craziest Fools **8.00** Top Gear **9.00** Russell Howard's Good News **10.00** Film: Fright Night (2011) **11.40** Family Guy **1.50** Bluestone 42 **2.20** Uncle **2.50** Russell Howard's Good News **3.50** Close **BBC Four**
7.00 Chemistry – A Volatile History **8.00** Lost Kingdoms of Central America **9.00** Inspector Montalbano **10.50** Tales from the Royal Wardrobe with Lucy Worsley **11.50** Top of the Pops **12.35** Kate Bush at the BBC **1.35** The Rolling Stones at the BBC **2.20** Secret Knowledge: Hogarth – One Man and His Pug **2.50** Lost Kingdoms of Central America **3.50** Close **ITV2**
11.10 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway **12.35** Catchphrase **1.20** The Hot Desk: Ella Henderson **1.30** Film: Legally Blonde 2: Red, White and Blonde (2003) **6.50** Film: Wild Wild West (1999) **9.00** Film: Rush Hour 2 (2001) **10.50** Celebrity Juice **11.35** Ibiza Weekender **12.35** Crazy Beaches **1.00** Hell's Kitchen **1.50** Fake Reaction **2.25** Life's Funniest Moments **2.45** Teleshopping **5.45** ITV2 Nightscreen **ITV3**
11.45 Bertie and Elizabeth **1.50** A Touch of Frost **3.55** Wycliffe **5.00** Aagatha Christie's Marple **7.00** Doc Martin **8.00** Foyle's War **10.00** Inspector Morse **12.15** A Touch of Frost **2.15** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping **ITV4**
12.45 Live Snooker: World Grand Prix. Coverage of the opening semi-final of Llandudno. **5.15** Storage Wars **6.45** Live Snooker: World Grand Prix **11.15** Cricket World Cup Highlights **12.15** Film: 8 Mile (2002) **2.25** Hogan's Heroes **3.00** Teleshopping **E4**
11.35 Marry Me **12.00** New Girl **1.00** Film: Step Up (2006) **3.10** Melissa & Joey **4.00** Baby Daddy **5.00** Troy **5.50** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **6.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Film: Daredevil (2003) **11.05** The Big Bang Theory **11.35** Rude Tube: Mashed 'n' Mixed **12.35** Troy **1.40** 2 Broke Girls **2.10** How I Met Your Mother **3.00** Don't Trust the B**** in Apartment 23 **3.45** One Tree Hill **4.30** Make It or Break It **Film4**
11.00 Little Indians (1965) **1.00** The Phantom (1996) **3.00** Five Children and It (2004) **4.50** The China Syndrome (1979) **7.15** Airplane! (1980) **9.00** The Mechanic (2011) **10.50** Sinister (2012) **1.00** The Rocky Horror Picture Show (1975) **3.10** Close

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CHOICE



Louis Theroux

Louis Theroux: By Reason of Insanity (BBC2, 9pm)

The journalist immerses himself in the world of Ohio's maximum security state psychiatric hospitals, meeting patients who have committed crimes – some horrifically violent – while suffering from severe mental illnesses. In the first of a two-part programme, Louis spends time with patients who are attempting to come to terms with what they have done and talks to the clinicians entrusted with delivering the treatment it is hoped will one day lead to their reintegration back into society.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 7.30 Match of the Day. (R) **9.00 The Andrew Marr Show.** 10.00 The Big Questions. 11.00 Sunday Politics. 12.15 MOTD2 Extra. With Mark Chapman and the Match of the Day team. **1.00 BBC News.** Weather. 1.15 Bargain Hunt. (R) **2.15 Homes Under the Hammer.** (R) **3.15 The Truth About Sugar.** (R) **4.15 Escape to the Country.** (R) **4.45 Lifetime.** 5.05 Songs of Praise. 5.30 BBC News. 5.50 Regional Programme.

6.00 The Big Painting Challenge. Una Stubbs and Richard Bacon present the art competition from Liverpool, and for the amateurs' first challenge they are asked to paint their personal interpretation of the city in watercolours. With just a week until the final, two artists make the bold decision to change their styles in a bid to impress the judges. For the quick draw, the hopefuls capture the Royal Liver Building clock tower, followed by the final challenge – a busy painting of the city's skyline from across the River Mersey.

7.00 Countryfile. Adam Henson visits the Isle of Man, finding out about 19th-century naturalist Edward Forbes and local farming. Plus, archive items about different creatures spotted over the years.

8.00 Antiques Roadshow. The team visits Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, where items include a 1970s barber's chair, a 12th-century Hindu sculpture and collectibles indirectly related to the Titanic.

9.00 Poldark. Ross puts on a brave face when Elizabeth gives birth and is angered by gossip about him and Demeiza.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman introduces highlights of the latest Premier League matches, featuring Liverpool v Manchester United, Hull City v Chelsea and Queens Park Rangers v Everton.

11.40 The Football League Show. Bristol City v Walsall. Manish Bhasin presents highlights of the Johnstone's Paint Trophy final at Wembley Stadium, as the League One clubs battled it out for silverware.

12.25 The Apprentice USA. 1.45 Weather for the Week Ahead. 1.50 BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 Life in a Cottage Garden with Carol Klein. (R) **6.30 Great British Garden Revival.** (R) **7.30 Gardeners' World.** (R) **8.00 Countryfile.** (R) **9.00 The Football League Show.** (R) **10.20 Saturday Kitchen Best Bites.** 11.50 A Taste of Britain. 12.20 Back in Time for Dinner. (R) **1.10 Film: Day of the Evil Gun.** (1968) Western, starring Glenn Ford. **2.50 Some Mothers Do Awe' Em.** (R) **3.30 Three Up, Two Down.** (R) **4.00 Hide-Hill!** (R) **4.35 The Hairy Bikers and Lorraine Pascale: Cooking the Nation's Favourite Food.** (R) **5.35 Operation Stoneheart: What Lies Beneath.** (R) **6.35 Pompidou.** The thoughts of the penniless aristocrat turn to love on Valentine's Day and a chance meeting with a woman from a dating agency means his wishes might just come true.

7.00 Six Nations Greatest Moments. Gabby Logan presents a celebration of some of the most memorable moments from the rugby union competition, featuring archive action and testimonies from leading players of the past. With contributions from Jonny Wilkinson, Brian O'Driscoll, Gavin and Scott Hastings, Thomas Castaignède, Gareth Edwards, and Martin Jones.

8.00 Caribbean with Simon Reeve. New series. The adventurer travels around the islands and mainland coast of the Caribbean Sea, beginning by visiting the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Puerto Rico.

9.00 Louis Theroux: By Reason of Insanity. Part one of two. The journalist visits Ohio's maximum security state psychiatric hospitals, meeting patients who have committed crimes while suffering from severe mental illnesses.

10.00 Bluestone 42. Nick is called in to rescue a squaddie who has trapped his helmet in an IED tripwire – but things soon take a worrying turn. Elsewhere, Simon makes a life-changing discovery.

10.30 Film: Red Tails. (2012) Premiere. Black US fighter pilots battle both the German air force and racism in their own ranks. Second World War drama, starring Terrence Howard and Cuba Gooding Jr.

12.25 Film: Donkeys. (2010) 1.40 Sign Zone. Countryfile. (R) 2.40 Holby City. (R) 3.40 This is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Bottom Knockers Street. **6.10 Bottom Knockers Street.** (R) **6.20 Bottom Knockers Street.** (R) **6.35 Dino Dan.** (R) **7.00 Canimals.** (R) **7.10 Sooty.** (R) **7.25 Signed Stories: Share a Story.** (R) **7.30 Scrambled!** Scrambled! 7.35 Scrambled! Nerds & Monsters. (R) **7.50 Scrambled! The Aquabats! Super Show!** (R) **8.30 Scrambled!** Horrid Henry. **8.50 Scrambled!** Hulk and the Agents of Smash. **9.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **10.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **11.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **12.30 ITV News.** Weather. 12.45 Murder, She Wrote. (R) **1.45 Film: Fletch Lives.** (1989) Comedy sequel, starring Chevy Chase. **1.30 Film: Monsters.** (R) **4.00 Film: Twister.** (1996) Action thriller, with Helen Hunt and Bill Paxton.

6.15 Regional Programme. Weather.

6.15 ITV News. Weather.

7.30 The Chase: Celebrity Special. Coronation Street actress Samia Ghadie (Maria Connor), The Last Leg's Alex Brooker, presenter Annabel Gyles and comedian Julian Clary compete to win thousands of pounds for charity by taking on one of the show's resident trivia experts in a test of their general knowledge. However, they must work as a team to build their prize pot and stay one step ahead of the Chase. Bradley Walsh hosts. (R)

8.00 Off Their Rockers. Royston invents the ultimate mobile phone case. Paul tests out the world's most powerful leaf blower, and Seb steals flowers from a funeral.

8.00 All Star Family Fortunes. Hollyoaks actor Kieron Richardson (Ste Hay) and This Morning presenter Ruth Langford team up with their families in an attempt to win thousands for charity.

9.00 Mr Selfridge. Nancy has difficulty keeping her engagement to Harry a secret from Gus, and a meddling Princess Marie makes things even trickier. Miss Madge and Mr Grove come to blows again.

10.00 ITN News. Weather.

10.15 Bear Grylls: Mission Survive. The four remaining celebrities forage for food in the forest, endure another stormy night and face their most extreme challenge yet – crossing a 200ft ravine one by one on a rope. (R)

11.20 LVC: Cup Rugby Union. 12.15 The Top 2.30 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) 3.15 ITV Nightgreen. 5.05 The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.20 How I Met Your Mother. 6.45 How I Met Your Mother. 7.10 How I Met Your Mother. 7.35 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00 Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) **8.30 Frasier.** (R) **9.00 Frasier.** (R) **9.30 Sunday Brunch.** 12.30 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces. (R) **1.30 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **2.00 The Simpsons.** (R) **2.30 The Simpsons.** (R) **3.00 Film: The Spy Next Door.** (2010) Comedy, starring Jackie Chan. **4.50 Channel 4 News.** 5.10 Richard III: The Return of the King. **8.00 Great Canal Journeys.** Timothy West and Prunella Scales journey along the "London Ring", as it's known to narrowboat lovers, in a voyage of discovery through their home city. Starting in Brentford, they follow the Union Canal, and then the Regent's Canal until it meets the Thames at Limehouse. Along the way, they meet up with fellow actors Andrew Sachs and Ian McKellen, and visit the cemetery at Kensal Green, where their old friend, playwright Harold Pinter, is buried.

9.00 Indian Summers. A mountaineer saves Alice, Madeleine and Ronnie from a perilous situation and invigiles his way into Alice's affections, but she's unaware he has an ulterior motive. And when he later reveals he knows the truth about her past he leaves her in no doubt as to what exactly his silence will cost. Darius puts pressure on Roshana to accept Sita into the Dalal family fold, while Ramu is furious when he discovers Jaya has stolen his late wife's wedding dress. Dougie and Sarah work to rebuild their troubled marriage.

10.00 Gogglebox. Capturing the households' instant reactions to what they are watching on TV from the comfort of their own sofas. Narrated by Caroline Aherne. (R)

11.00 Film: The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn – Part 1. (2011) Vampire Edward and human Bella get married, but her subsequent pregnancy has dangerous implications. Romantic fantasy sequel, with Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson.

1.15 Film: Bruno. (2009) Spoof documentary, starring Sacha Baron Cohen. **2.35 Come Dine with Me.** (R) **4.50 River Cottage Veg Heroes.** (R) **5.20 Kirstie's Vintage Gems.** (R) **5.35 The Common Denominator.** (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! Peppa Pig. **6.05 Bananas in Pyjamas.** (R) **6.20 Angelina Ballerina.** (R) **6.35 Pip Ahoy!** (R) **6.45 The Mr Men Show.** (R) **6.55 Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures.** (R) **7.00 Chloe's Closet.** (R) **7.15 Oily the Little White Van.** 7.20 Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.30 Paw Patrol.** (R) **7.45 Little Princess.** (R) **8.00 Wanda and the Alien.** (R) **8.10 Zack and Quack.** **8.25 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom.** (R) **8.45 Jelly Jamm.** (R) **9.00 LazyTown.** 9.30 Dora and Friends. 10.30 Spongobob SquarePants. **10.35 The Dog Rescuers.** (R) **11.00 The Hotel Inspector.** (R) **12.00 The Hotel Inspector.** (R) **12.05 Film: Phenomenon.** (1996) Fantasy drama, starring John Travolta. **3.20 Film: The Borrowers.** (1997) Children's fantasy, starring John Goodman. **5.00 Film: A Cinderella Story.** (2004) Romantic comedy, starring Hilary Duff and Chad Michael Murray.

6.50 5 News Weekend.

6.55 Film: Lara Croft: Tomb Raider – The Cradle of Life. (2003) The daredevil heroine returns on a new quest, this time to search the world for the legendary Pandora's Box. However, a devious scientist is determined to get his hands on it first and realise his cunning scheme to harness the box's power as a deadly weapon. Action adventure sequel, starring Angelina Jolie, Gerard Butler, Ciaran Hinds, Chris Barrie and Djimon Hounsou. Edited for language and violence.

9.00 Film: Alex Cross. (2012) Premiere. A homicide cop pursues an ex-military assassin who has sadistically tortured and murdered a wealthy executive, leaving a surreal clue to the next victim. However, as the detective tries to bring the killing spree to an end, he finds his own family is also in the firing line. Crime thriller, starring Tyler Perry, Matthew Fox and Jean Reno.

11.05 Film: Scream 4. (2011) Three-time massacre survivor Sidney Prescott faces a new masked killer marking the 15th anniversary of the original murders. Horror sequel, starring Neve Campbell and Emma Roberts.

1.10 SuperCasino. Live interactive gaming. **3.10 The Restaurant Inspector.** A Afro-Caribbean restaurant in Sheffield. (R) **4.00 House Doctor.** (R) **4.25 Make It Big.** (R) **5.15 Angels of Jarm.** (R) **5.40 Roary the Racing Car.** (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three

7.00 The Voice UK. 8.55 The Voice UK Results. **9.30 Russell Howard's Good News.** **10.00 I Survived a Zombie Apocalypse.** **11.00 Family Guy.** **11.45 Blueprints 42.** **12.15 American Dad!** **12.35 I Survived a Zombie Apocalypse.** **1.35 Russell Howard's Good News.** **2.05 Blueprints 42.** **2.35 Jenny Bode: AAA 2.55 Muslim Miss World.**

BBC Four

7.00 The Great War. **8.20 Pop Go the Sixties.** **8.30 Secret Knowledge: Stradivarius and Me.** **9.00 Lost Cities of the Ancients.** **10.00 Film: Sleep Tight.** (2011) **11.35 Kenny Rogers: Cards on the Table.** **12.35 Top of the Pops: The Story of 1980.** **1.35 Kings of Soul.** **2.35 Lost Cities of the Ancients.**

ITV2

12.10 Take Me Out. **1.20 Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records.** **1.50 Scorpion.** **2.45 Catchphrase Celebrity Special.** **3.40 Film: Hotel Transylvania.** (2012) **5.25 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway.** **6.50 Film: She's the Man.** (2006) **9.00 Ibiza Weekender.** **10.00 Film: The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo.** (2011) **1.10 Mom.** **2.00 Life's Funniest Moments.** **2.25 Teleshopping.** **5.55 ITV2 Nightscreen.**

ITV3

11.35 A Touch of Frost. **1.40 Wycliffe.** **2.45 Touch of Frost.** **4.45 Agatha Christie's Marple.** **5.50 Inspector Morse.** **8.00 Sunday Night at the Palladium.** **10.00 Birds of a Feather.** **10.30 City Lights.** **11.35 Film: Steptoe and Son.** (1972) **1.30 Perspectives: Lenny Henry – Finding Shakespeare.** **2.20 Judge Judy.** **2.40 Wycliffe.** **3.40 Emmerdale.**

ITV4

11.45 Storage Wars. **12.45 Live Snooker: World Grand Prix.** Coverage of the opening session of the final from Llandudno. **5.15 Storage Wars.** **5.40 River Monsters.** **6.45 Live Snooker: World Grand Prix.** **11.15 Film: Fearless.** (2006) **1.25 Minder.** **2.30 Nitro Circus.** **2.55 ITV4 Nightscreen.** **3.00 Teleshopping.**

E4

12.30 Revenge. **1.30 The 100.** **2.30 Rude (ish).** **Tube 2.55 How I Met Your Mother.** **3.55 Brooklyn Nine-Nine.** **4.30 The Big Bang Theory.** **7.30 Film: Gulliver's Travels.** (2010) **9.00 Troy.** **10.00 Rude Tube: Mashed!** **11.05 The Big Bang Theory.** **11.35 Tattoos After Dark.** **12.35 Taking New York.** **1.40 Rules of Engagement.** **2.30 The New Normal.** **3.20 Hollyoaks.**

Film4

11.00 The Producers. (1968) **1.00 Taxi.** (2004) **3.00 The Last Mimzy.** (2007) **4.50 Edward Scissorhands.** (1990) **6.55 America's Sweethearts.** (2001) **9.00 Hitman.** (2007) **10.50 Notorious.** (2009) **1.15 The Ballad of Jack and Rose.** (2005) **3.35 Close**

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MONDAY

Tears of the Sun, Channel 5, 10.55pm

A veteran lieutenant leads an elite Navy Seal team on an undercover mission to evacuate a doctor from crisis-torn Nigeria. However, the brutality of the conflict prompts the rescuers to disobey orders and intervene to save the lives of helpless refugees. Action drama, starring Bruce Willis, Monica Bellucci, Cole Hauser and Eamonn Walker. (2003)

TUESDAY

The Vow, Channel 5, 11pm

A newlywed couple are involved in a car accident, and the wife wakes up with no memory of her husband. While he tries to get her to fall in love with him all over again, she is reunited with her estranged parents, who never approved of the marriage and see her condition as a chance to make a fresh start. Romantic drama, with Rachel McAdams, Channing Tatum, Jessica Lange and Sam Neill. (2012)



Tears of the Sun, Monday, Channel 5, 10.55pm

WEDNESDAY

The Devil's Double, BBC1, 11.15pm

An Iraqi soldier is forced to become a double for Saddam Hussein's sadistic son Uday to distract assassins. His new role plunges him into a world of depravity, as he becomes a first-hand witness to the acts of murder and violence Uday routinely indulges in. Drama, starring Dominic Cooper, Ludvine Sagnier and Philip Quast. (2011)

THURSDAY

Montana Sky, Channel 5, 3.15pm

Three women with the same father but different mothers meet for the first time after their estranged father dies. They discover he has left them his ranch in his will - on the condition that they run the estate together for at least a year. Unfortunately, they soon learn the old man had enemies determined to make sure they fail. Drama, starring Ashley Williams and Laura Mennell. (2007)

FRIDAY

Glory, BBC2, 11.35pm

Fact-based historical drama chronicling the story of the first all-black regiment to fight in the American Civil War, and the inexperienced officer given the job of training the men and leading them into battle. Starring Matthew Broderick, Cary Elwes, Morgan Freeman and Denzel Washington, who received an Oscar for his performance. (1989)

Clegg makes a decision in the Nick of time

Rumours, backstabbing, double-dealings and u-turns – such things are about to dominate the headlines as a general election is looming large on the horizon.

While most of the media world seems to have got caught up in the will-he-won't-he tales involving David Cameron and the televised leadership debate he seems to be reluctant to participate in, Channel 4 has quietly been putting together Coalition, a drama about, you guessed it, the coalition.

The station is no stranger to political dramas, having already backed such acclaimed shows as *Mo*, *Complicit* and *The Deal*. Sadly, it was also behind *UKIP: The First 100 Days*, the fictionalised documentary which received a bashing from critics and audiences alike when it was broadcast last month.

However, Coalition promises to be rather more impressive.

It's been written by James Graham, who is sticking with politics for his next project – the stage play *The Vote*, which will form part of the Donmar Warehouse's spring season;

More4 will also broadcast the production live on the night of the election itself.

Coalition focuses on the rise of Nick Clegg. In 2010, he was the leader of the Liberal Democrats, and barely anybody gave him a second thought – he certainly wasn't regarded as a possibly major player.

However, taking part in the UK's first-ever televised leaders' debate changed all that. Suddenly, thanks to an impassioned speech, he became an unlikely hero, someone who gave rivals David Cameron and Gordon Brown a wake-up call – or at least a kick up the backside.

"I believe the way things are is not the way things have to be," he famously stated. "We have a chance to do things differently for once."

Then, after the election, he was given the opportunity to form a coalition – and, as this drama reveals, Clegg's moves at that time became one of the most influential and significant political decisions of recent years.

"In May 2010, British politics was faced with a dilemma it hadn't had to

face in peacetime for over 75 years," says Graham. "The public were asked 'who should govern', and they came back with the answer – 'we don't know'. Those historic, dramatic few days put personalities at the heart of politics – and the choices made. I believe, changed the face of British politics forever."

"What we try to capture in this drama is the tension, the high stakes, and the frequent farcical and absurd nature of what happens when a power is wrangled, negotiated and fought over like children trading cards in the playground."

Clegg is played here by Bertie Carvel, who is in the midst of a big year career-wise – as well as Coalition, he is set to appear in the BBC's eagerly awaited adaptation of Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell.

Ian Grieve plays outgoing Prime Minister Gordon Brown, a role he's accustomed to after starring on stage in *The Confessions of Gordon Brown*, while Mark Dexter plays David Cameron.

Look out too for Mark Gatiss, who's on fine form as Peter Mandelson.



Bertie Carvel stars as Nick Clegg in Coalition, Thursday, Channel 4, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY

Trevor McDonald Meets the Mafia
ITV, 9pm

The Godfather, GoodFellas, The Sopranos – the shadowy world of the US Mafia has inspired some incredible dramas. But how realistic is their depiction of a life of organised crime? We're about to get an insight, as in this two-part documentary, Trevor McDonald gains unprecedented access to some of the people who have experienced the money, the glamour and the violence first hand. The veteran broadcaster starts his journey in Queens, New York, where he meets John Alite, aka The Sheriff, who explains how he began his ascent up the ranks following the orders for the infamous John Gotti Snr during the 1980s and 1990s. But while would-be mobsters may have to prove their loyalty, the consequences for betraying their fellow criminals can be severe...

TUESDAY

Ordinary Lies
BBC1, 9pm

Fun-loving receptionist Tracy longs to escape her mundane life. It seems she has found the answer when she starts dating local DJ Jimmy, who offers to whisk her and her workmate Viv off on an all-expenses-paid trip to the Caribbean. A free exotic break seems too good to be true – and sure

enough, it soon becomes clear there is more to the holiday than meets the eye. Meanwhile, Beth's suspicions grow when she discovers the identity of her husband's late-night caller. Michelle Keegan (Coronation Street) stars.

WEDNESDAY
24 Hours in A&E
Channel 4, 9pm

Hospital dramas are hardly in short supply these days, but it turns out we love a hospital-based documentary just as much as much as the fictional stuff, as this award-winning series continues. The episode looks at families whose strong bonds have seen them through the worst that life can throw at them. Les lost control of his Land Rover, and has been admitted to St George's with lacerations on his head. He'll need emergency surgery, and the team test for underlying head and neck injuries, while his dad Michael rushes to his side. Meanwhile, Cambelle, a 21-year-old plumber, has an infected cyst, and 67-year-old retired doctor Patrick has been involved in horse-riding accident, in which he was dragged 130ft and not found for more than two hours.



Ordinary Lies, Tuesday, BBC1, 9pm

THURSDAY

Richard III: The King Laid to Rest
Channel 4, 8pm

This final programme in Channel 4's coverage of the reburyal of Richard III provides highlights of the service from earlier today at Leicester Cathedral, alongside a live broadcast of a last moment of intimate ceremonial, in which the king's descendants, and those who led the campaign to find his remains, gather to bid him a final farewell. The Bosworth beacon, lit when Richard's remains arrived back at the site of his death on Sunday morning, will be extinguished as the tombstone is revealed for the first time.

The Truth About Calories
BBC1, 9pm

In the second documentary on health issues, Chris van Tulleken runs a series of experiments to get to the

bottom of calories. He tests the real calorie content of randomly selected supermarket foods – finding that the labels aren't always accurate – and examines the best way to burn them off. For this he gets three families to engage in different activities after a big fry-up – from a tough workout at the gym to relaxing on the sofa. He also reveals a few kitchen secrets, managing to strip 360 calories out of steak

FRIDAY

Marvel's Agents of SHIELD
Channel 4, 8pm

With Avengers: Age of Ultron about to dominate cinemas, and Daredevil and Agent Carter focusing on the small screen, Marvel's quest for media domination shows little sign of abating. And with this returning series offering plenty of clues for fans of the comic book universe, fan boys and girls alike will be thrilled as Agent Coulson and his eclectic band of crimefighters return after their mid-season break. As alarming revelations threaten to destroy them, Coulson and the agents are faced with the consequences of their war with Hydra. Their foe makes a risky move that could involve a traitor in SHIELD's midst. Series regulars Clark Gregg, Ming-Na Wen, Chloe Bennet and Iain De Caestecker head the cast.

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- Railway • National Coal Board (Ncb) • Food • Rubber • Pipe Layers
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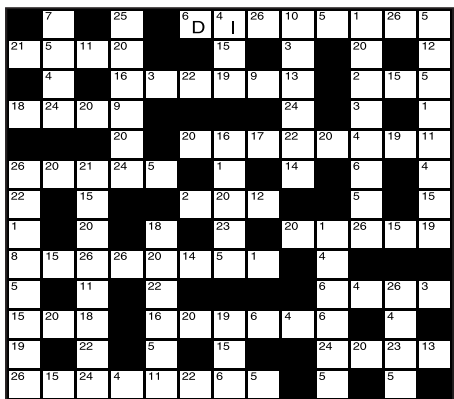
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Dudley, DY1 4TB

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
J	B	Q	I	R	K	N	F	G	S	U	P	E
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
T	M	Y	H	D	O	X	C	W	L	A	V	Z

1	14
2	15
3	16
4 I	17
5	18
6 D	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

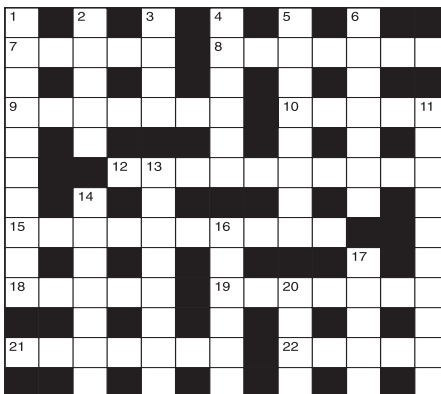
Cryptic Clues:

Across

7. The way the tour is diverted to the East (5)
8. Becomes snarled up at corner in back-street (7)
9. An insult to a seaside promenade, we hear (7)
10. The French travel south to Nigerian port (5)
12. You could find these right in the main shopping centre (4,6)
15. Right-handed key (6,4)
18. This coin was a sovereign (5)
- 19 & 13Dn. This will deceive the pupils (7,8)
21. Individual after different name for a flower (7)
22. Get to the bottom and connect the pipe-line (5)

Down

1. Normal, neat decorative arrangement (10)
2. They went round the necks of thugs, we hear (5)
3. Famous fiddler in Stainer oratorio (4)
4. What the needle produces is an acute pain (6)
5. Take out of gear (8)
6. Did some signalling, but became weary (7)
11. Complete black suit needed by one who goes round the course (3,2,5)
13. See 19 Across
14. Declines to put rubbish on the top of the scrap-heap (7)
16. Mob round the East whooped in triumph (6)
17. Show disdain for one who reconnoitres (5)
20. Betty Perkins to do some secretarial work inside (4)



Quick Clues:

Across

7. Precept (5)
8. Flood (7)
9. A month (7)
10. Sugary (5)
12. Affirm (10)
15. Emphasise (10)
18. Lock (5)
19. Relations (7)
21. Dirty (7)
22. Goodbye (5)

Down

1. Book-keeper (10)
2. Join (5)
3. Door handle (4)
4. Famish (6)
5. Expectation (8)
6. Indefinite (7)
11. Huge (10)
13. Ominous (8)
14. Shriek (7)
16. Harsh (6)
17. Coach (5)
20. Tidy (4)

7	9			5		2		
	3			9			4	5
		8	1					3
6			8		5	9		
5		1					3	8
		9	4					6
					7	8		
8	2			3			7	
		7		8			1	4

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S
SOLUTIONS >

4	9	8	2	3	5	1	7
7	6	1	9	8	4	5	3
5	2	3	6	1	7	9	8
6	4	7	5	2	3	8	1
9	8	2	4	7	1	3	6
3	1	5	8	9	6	4	2
2	5	9	3	6	8	7	4
8	7	4	1	5	2	6	9
1	3	6	7	4	9	2	5

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
 CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Restraint; 8 Air; 9 Incantation; 11 Artist; 12 Posts; 13 Canvases; 15 Prefer; 17 Avast; 18 Celsius; 20 Tuition fees; 22 Ewe; 23 Elephants; 24 Emission; 25 Eton; 26 Rings; 4 Images; 5 Triangles; 6 Sands of time; 7 Time; 10 Coarctation; 11 Archangel; 14 Astride; 16 Scribble; 19 Lunch; 21 Eat. QUICK - Across: 1 Prostrate; 8 Let; 9 Storm-signal; 11 Builder; 12 Baste; 13 Idiocy; 15 Repose; 17 Knave; 18 Patriot; 20 Intercepted; 22 Set; 23 Respected. Down: 2 Rat; 3 Timid; 4 Aviary; 5 Ennoble; 6 Illusionist; 7 Statement; 10 Originality; 11 Briskness; 14 Creator; 16 Shorts; 19 Theme; 21 Ere.

1. Who is credited with discovering penicillin in 1928?
2. In which country are the Queen's bodyguards the Royal Company of Archers?
3. What was IRA man Dominic McGlinchey's nickname?
4. Who wrote Strangers on a Train?
5. Which bird has honey and rough-legged varieties?

6. Which country was formerly known as the Gold Coast?
7. Which skier is known as La Bomba?
8. Who wrote *Our Man in Havana*?
9. Which river divides Kentish Men from Men of Kent?
10. Which composer's *Adagietto* from his 5th Symphony was used in the film *Death In Venice*?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Henry VIII: 2 James Herriot: 3

Essex: 4 Rene Descartes: 5 Grandsons: 6

Wild pansy: 7 Heroin: 8 Daniel Radcliffe: 9

Robinson Crusoe; 10 Inter Milan.

Niner: UNLOCATED

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

578 gives a nocturnal mammal,
98678 gives a kind of weasel,
31249 gives insects.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---



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Superb five-bedroomed house is in a cul-de-sac



A SUPERBLY presented large five-bedroomed detached family home at the head of a cul-de-sac, The Lawley, Halesowen, is part of The Squirrels development.

It is for sale through Hicks Hadley at £279,950.

It has an entrance hall, a spacious lounge with a feature fireplace with a gas fire, large dining kitchen with a Rangemaster cooker with matching dark green enamelled canopy, a walk-in storage cupboard, patio doors to a conservatory, utility room, WC, five bedrooms (bedroom four/study, one with wardrobes), a bathroom with a bath with a shower over. There is a garage, a good sized front garden, a spacious driveway and an extensive, attractively presented rear garden. For further information contact Hicks Hadley on 0121 5856667 or visit www.hickshadley.com



A spacious family home – £219,950

THIS executive-style detached property in Doulton Road, Rowley Regis, would be ideal for a growing family.

Having a drive leading to a garage, it is for sale through Goodchilds at £219,950.

With central heating and double glazing, it comprises an entrance hall, a living room with an electric fire, a dining room with patio doors, conservatory, a kitchen, downstairs WC, master bedroom with built-in wardrobes, three further bedrooms and a bathroom with a corner bath and shower. Contact Goodchilds on 0121 506767 or visit www.goodchilds-uk.com



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<div><div>Halesowen</div><div></div><div><div>Manor Lane</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Superior detached bungalow* Desirable location with open aspect* 3 bedrooms * 2 shower rooms* Lounge/dining room* Fitted kitchen/breakfast room/conservatory* Fitted cloakroom * Utility room* Double garage with electrically operated door* Brand new carpets* Pleasant gardens* Gas boiler heating radiators</div><div>EPC=F</div><div>Offers in the region of £450,000</div></div></div>	<div><div>Halesowen</div><div></div><div><div>Rosafeld Avenue</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Semi detached house* Lounge * Dining Room* Kitchen & Breakfast Room* Four bedrooms* Good sized rear garden* Garage EPC=tbc</div><div></div><div>Offers in the region of £264,950</div></div></div>	<div><div>Halesowen</div><div></div><div><div>Priory Road</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Detached house* Two reception rooms* Kitchen/breakfast room* Three good sized bedrooms* Integral garage* Rear tandem garage with driveway off Cavendish Road</div><div>EPC=tbc</div><div>Offers in the region of £375,000</div></div></div>	<div><div>Halesowen</div><div></div><div><div>Stourbridge Road</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Detached bungalow* Good sized garage* Three bedrooms (master with en-suite)* Breakfast kitchen* Conservatory</div><div>EPC=D</div><div>Offers in the region of £299,950</div></div></div>
<div><div>Oldbury</div><div></div><div><div>Hawthorn Croft</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Semi detached house* Utility area and downstairs wc* Two reception rooms* Three bedrooms* Small garage/store</div><div>EPC=E</div><div>Offers in the region of £199,950</div></div></div>	<div><div>Oldbury</div><div></div><div><div>Apsley Road</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Semi detached house in need of general modernisation* Living room and dining room* Three bedrooms* Garage* Good sized rear garden</div><div>EPC=E</div><div>Offers in the region of £149,950</div></div></div>	<div><div>Oldbury</div><div></div><div><div>Pound Road</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Semi detached house* Recently re-planned and modified* Kitchen/dining room* Three Bedrooms</div><div>EPC=G</div><div>Offers in the region of £199,950</div></div></div>	<div><div>Oldbury Tividale</div><div></div><div><div>Gibbet Hill</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Split level detached house* Open plan living space* Fitted cloakroom* Four bedrooms* En suite shower room* Utility* Double garage</div><div>EPC=C</div><div>Offers in the region of £337,499</div></div></div>
<div><div>Cradley Heath</div><div></div><div><div>Trejon Road</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Traditional style semi-detached House* Kitchen/dining room* Three bedrooms* Extensive rear garden</div><div>EPC=D</div><div>Offers in the region of £149,950</div></div></div>	<div><div>Quinton</div><div></div><div><div>College Road</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Mid Terraced House* Three Bedrooms* First Floor Shower Room* Vacant Possession</div><div>EPC=tbc</div><div>Offers in the region of £104,950</div></div></div>	<div><div>Rowley Regis</div><div></div><div><div>Oldbury Road</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Three bedroom semi detached* Kitchen/breakfast room* Downstairs wc* Low maintenance garden* Detached rear garage</div><div>EPC=D</div><div>£130,000</div></div></div>	<div><div>Quinton</div><div></div><div><div>Faraday Avenue</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Semi-detached house* In need of some modernisation and improvement* Two reception rooms* Three bedrooms EPC=tbc</div><div></div><div>Offers in the region of £99,950</div></div></div>

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ROWLEY REGIS, Powke Lane£895 pcm+Fees
Modern semi detached house on spacious corner plot within close proximity to local shops, schools and amenities. Featuring entrance hall, lounge, dining room, breakfast kitchen, utility and guest w.c., 4 generous bedrooms, family bathroom and en suite to master bedroom to the 1st floor. The property further benefits from having an integral garage, driveway, good gardens to front, side and rear, gas central heating and double glazing. EPC: C



BIRMINGHAM, Orion Building£800 pcm+Fees
A fantastic opportunity to rent a fully furnished apartment in the heart of Birmingham City Centre. This 1 bed modern property overlooking the Mailbox features open plan living with 24 hour concierge service and secure underground parking (permit required), double glazed and electric heating. Viewings highly recommended. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Beecher Street£675 pcm+Fees
A deceptively large unfurnished bungalow which has just been refurbished. Ideal for buses to Halesowen, Stourbridge and Birmingham and in the catchment area for Colley Lane Primary School. Featuring a large lounge, modern fitted kitchen, new bathroom with shower. Benefits include central heating, double glazing driveway parking. Available now. EPC: D



ROWLEY REGIS, Fairbourne Avenue£675 pcm+Fees
Perfect for a family and close to the M5. A large Mucklow Style detached home which is available now, close to local shops and bus routes. Featuring 2 double bedrooms with fitted wardrobes and 1 large single bedroom, 2 good size lounges, large kitchen, downstairs w.c, shower room, gas central heating, new windows, huge rear garden, driveway and garage. EPC: D



OLDBURY, Barston Road £595 pcm+Fees
A lovely semi-detached house in this very popular residential area. Hallway, lounge/dining area, modern fitted kitchen, 2 large double bedrooms, bathroom with shower. Private rear garden. Available 1/4/2015. EPC: TBC



CRADLEY HEATH, Meadow Walk£550 pcm+Fees
Modern semi detached house within a popular residential area featuring gas central heating, spacious living room, modern fitted kitchen, downstairs house bathroom, 3 good size bedrooms, large rear garden, driveway parking for 2 cars. Available immediately EPC: E



HALESOWEN, Princess Crescent£550 pcm+Fees
A very well presented 1st floor flat available in this popular and convenient location, briefly comprising of a modern kitchen with integrated dishwasher, good size lounge, 2 good size bedrooms, beautiful newly fitted bathroom with 'P' shape bath with shower, integral garage & parking for 2 vehicles. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Malt Mill Lane£535 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished mid terraced house, within walking distance to Blackheath Town Centre and not far from Rowley Regis train station, briefly comprising of: 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, downstairs shower room, 2 double bedrooms. Benefits include rear garden, off road parking. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Witton Bank £525 pcm+Fees
A well presented 2 bedroom 2nd floor apartment in a very sought after location. Having secure intercom entry, entrance hall, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with shower, large lounge, kitchen, garage en block and communal gardens. Available immediately. EPC: C



CRADLEY HEATH, Luanne Close£500 pcm+Fees
Wonderfully presented and with its own balcony. A 1st floor modern apartment, ideally located for Old Hill train station and local shops. Featuring 1 double bedroom and 1 single bedroom, modern kitchen with washer/dryer, lovely lounge with access to your own private balcony, house bathroom with shower, allocated parking. EPC: B



DUDLEY, Lantern Road £495 pcm+Fees
A beautifully presented mid terraced home close to local amenities. Featuring 2 bedrooms, modern fitter kitchen, spacious lounge, double glazing, gas central heating, rear garden and patio area, allocated parking. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Ladysmith Road£495 pcm+Fees
A mid terraced house in a sought after area for Colley Lane Primary School, bus links to Halesowen and Stourbridge. This house features 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, dining area, new downstairs shower room, 2 good size bedrooms, double glazing, gas central heating, rear garden. EPC: TBC



KIDDERMINSTER, Keats Place£485 pcm+Fees
A well presented 2 bedroom ground floor flat, having accommodation including: hall, lounge, refitted kitchen with appliances, 2 bedrooms, bathroom, gas central heating, double glazed and cul de sac location. Virgin Broadband connection is available. Own entrance to the property. EPC: C



TIPTON, Anchor Drive £475 pcm+Fees
Modern and comfortable living. A 3rd floor apartment within easy access to Dudley, Tipton and the M5. Featuring 2 double bedrooms, modern kitchen, white bathroom suite with shower, spacious lounge with patio doors opening to a Juliet balcony, electric heating, double glazing, garage. EPC: C



ROWLEY REGIS, Hanover Road£450 pcm+Fees
A well presented modern ground floor apartment offering open plan living. Featuring a fitted kitchen with breakfast bar and appliances, 1 double bedroom, bathroom and shower with fitted vanity units, patio doors leading from the lounge to the communal rear gardens. Allocated parking to rear, electric heating and double glazing. 1 MONTHS DEPOSIT REQUIRED. EPC: D



WEST BROMWICH, Mountbatten Close£450 pcm+Fees
A recently refurbished 1 bedroom 1st floor apartment being double glazed and centrally heated. The property is available for immediate occupation and is located conveniently for access to the M5 with communal parking and briefly comprises a reception hall, lounge, 1 bedroom, bathroom with shower and re-fitted kitchen. EPC: C



HALESOWEN, Belgrave Road£430 pcm+Fees
A large ground floor modern apartment within walking distance to Blackheath Town Centre and local buses. Featuring a spacious lounge, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, 1 double bedroom, newly fitted bathroom suite with shower. Gas central heating, small rear garden with private entrance. Available Now. EPC: TBC



CRADLEY HEATH, Archer Gardens£425 pcm+Fees
Set within a quiet complex, close to Cradley Heath Town Centre and the local train station, is this unfurnished ground floor maisonette, benefitting from gas central heating (Bathroom), electric heating in the lounge and bedrooms, large living room with separate dining area, fitted kitchen, 2 bedrooms, bathroom with shower, communal gardens and allocated parking. EPC: C



HALESOWEN, Shenstone Flats£425 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished 2nd floor flat, close to local shops and bus routes. Featuring 2 good size bedrooms, gas central heating, large living room, fitted kitchen and storage area, bathroom with shower, communal garden, parking available to rear. EPC: E



OLDBURY, Causeway Green Road£425 pcm+Fees
This large, split level flat above shops, within walking distance to bus links and close to J2 of the M5, briefly comprising of: gas central heating, spacious living room, fitted kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with shower, parking to rear, unfurnished. EPC: E



LYE, High Street £375 pcm+Fees
Fully refurbished in the centre of Lye. This spacious 2nd floor apartment features a lovely lounge, 1 double bedroom, bathroom, modern and contemporary kitchen/ diner, electric heating, double glazing, on road parking. Available now. EPC: E

PROPERTY

Detached family home in a sought after area



NUMBER 57 Melrose Avenue, Pedmore, Stourbridge, is a detached family residence in a sought after area.

It is for sale through Andrew Grant at £365,000.

It has a off road parking, an entrance hall with stairs off, WC, living room with a bay window and a living flame effect gas fire, dining room with a patio door, a kitchen diner with an extractor, dishwasher, fridge and microwave and dining area, utility, study, four bedrooms (master en-suite), a bathroom, garden with patio and a garage. Contact Andrew Grant on 01384 440993 or visit www.andrew-grant.co.uk website.



Two-bedroomed house was recently refurbished



RECENTLY refurbished throughout, this beautifully presented property in Merryfield Road, Dudley, backs on to woodland is for sale through Trinity Property at £114,950.

It has an entrance hall, a lounge with a dining area with laminate flooring and French doors to the garden, an attractive modern fitted kitchen with light wood-effect cabinets and contrasting working surfaces, two double bedrooms, a bathroom with a white suite wall tiling and a shower screen, gas central heating and double glazing where specified.

There is a pleasant rear garden backing on to woodland, also driveway parking.

For further information contact Trinity Property on (01384) 213395 or visit www.trinityproperty.net



Invincible car a fine choice

By Matt Joy

Porsche's range of GTS models are turning out to be the aces in the pack; now there's a Cayenne version to join the line up.

The Cayenne has only just been updated, gaining internal and external tweaks, but in GTS form, it gets its own set of upgrades: there's a unique exterior styling package, which includes a body-coloured styling kit, larger matte-finished alloy wheels and GTS badging.

Mechanically, the GTS gets a new turbocharged V6 engine to replace the old naturally aspirated V8, a sports exhaust system, unique suspension tune and some tasty interior kit including Alcantara trim and sports seats.

Where once the Cayenne was something of an acquired taste, it's hard not to find the latest model's design pleasing to

the eye. It certainly looks its sharpest in GTS form; the body-coloured lower section gives it better stance and hides its bulk well.

Its image is all the better for the GTS makeover too, although even now it's not a car for the shy, retiring type. When you're behind the wheel, it's hard not to feel like a success, which is precisely why it's such a popular choice.

Best

The GTS makes no compromises over the standard car in respect of space for passengers or luggage, so you can expect plenty of both. In fact the Cayenne offers one of the best cabins in the business; the seats are superbly supportive and comfortable with a huge range of adjustment, there's plenty of space front and rear and the boot can carry a stack of suitcases happily. Although it's unlikely to ever venture off-road, it's more than capable of getting you out of a sticky situation, even though the GTS isn't the best version for such adventures.

The biggest change for this latest GTS is the switch to turbocharged power, an inevitable result of the quest for improved emissions and economy. On the one hand, you do lose a little of the character of the old V8 engine, but in truth the V6 still sounds good, offers more power and torque and better fuel consumption.

Like pretty much every Porsche these days, all the mechanical elements blend together beautifully to create a car that just feels right when you're behind the wheel. The engine is powerful and flexible, the gearbox smooth but rapid-shifting when required and it handles with incredible



'Where once the Cayenne was something of an acquired taste, it's hard not to find the latest model's design pleasing to the eye.'

verve and precision for a car of this size. On a frozen test track in northern Sweden, the GTS drifted and danced its way along the treacherous surface with zero fuss. Yet it's still superbly comfortable when driven normally and can tackle long distances with ease.

The Cayenne GTS isn't a cheap car of course, but compared to the Cayenne S, on which it is based, you get a lot more for your extra cash. The more powerful engine, uprated brakes and suspension, smart bodykit and bigger alloy wheels are all worthwhile upgrades, while inside

there's lots of Alcantara and those lovely sports seats all as standard.

Who would buy it? Many buyers of the Cayenne are Porsche fans who find that the firm's smaller cars no longer fit in with their lifestyle, so the Cayenne is a genuine jack of all trades; families will love it, couples will love the fact that it is comfortable but also capable of towing, and even if you're stuck in the city, the high driving position and presence takes the strain out of stop-start traffic. The short answer then is anyone who can afford it.

Porsche Cayenne GTS, £72,523



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Iconic van still being produced 65 years on

By James Parker

Some retire at the age of 65 – but this one is just getting started! Production of the first Volkswagen Transporter began 65 years ago and the 'Bulli' is still going strong today.

The first models were built in Wolfsburg before production started at a new facility in Hanover in 1956. This date also marks the beginning of a unique automotive love story: today, the entire model series has attained cult status. Whether hippy or tradesman – everyone is driving Transporter.

It all began in 1947 with a pencil sketch: the Dutch car importer Ben Pon saw a simple flat-bed vehicle at the Volkswagen plant and, taking it as a basic idea, he sketched the outlines of a Transporter with Beetle DNA in his notebook.

Two years later, Volkswagen plant manager, Heinrich Nordhoff, presented four prototypes: two panel vans, a kombi and a small bus. Nordhoff promised that the Transporter would be as uncompromising and robust as the Beetle: "These vehicles won't be handled with kid gloves, rather they will be treated roughly."

Designers used the engine and axles of the Beetle. Instead of a central tubular frame of the popular family car, the bus had a unitized body that was mounted on a ladder frame. The 1.1-litre engine produced 18 kW (24.5PS) at 3300 rpm.

The bus could transport up to eight people and the two rear seat rows could be removed easily to free up load space for around 750 kg of payload.

Alfred Haesner, head of technical development of Volkswagen GmbH from 1948 to 1952, said: "Accordingly, this type of commercial delivery vehicle can be used for all branches of business, for rush deliveries and freight, e.g. as a small bus, a special-purpose vehicle, postal vehicle, ambulance or mobile station."

Demand

Production began on March 8, 1950, in Hall 1 of the Volkswagen plant in Wolfsburg, and ten vehicles were manufactured per day.

By the end of 1950, 8001 Transporters had already been built. Demand was enormous, especially since its affordable price made it an attractive option to tradesmen and retail businesses.

The unique vehicle quickly became an export hit as well. Volkswagen buses could simply transport anything and everything: rubble and debris, mortar and building stones, breakfast rolls and bees wax, cigars and newspapers.

A Volkswagen bus with a camping box made its appearance in 1951 at the automobile exhibition in Berlin. The delivery van with a rear engine suddenly held the promise of an entirely different type of travel. For the first time, it travelled over the Alps. Later, it was driven to India when hippies discovered the 'Bulli' for themselves.

Four years after its production launch, the 100,000th Volkswagen Transporter came off the assembly line in Wolfsburg in 1954. By this point, there were 30 different models of the vehicle. Daily production in Wolfsburg was at 80 vehicles but it couldn't produce more because the plant was already filled to capacity with Beetle production. It became clear that the Transporter needed its own plant.

Assembly

Construction work began in early March 1955 in Hanover-Stöcken, and the plant was built from the ground up in just one year.

In March 1956, the first "Made in Stöcken" Transporters came off the assembly line. This was the beginning of a future symbol of the 'economic wonder years'. Today, a total of 11 million T-series vehicles spanning five generations have been produced worldwide.

Dr. Eckhard Scholz, chairman of the Bboard board of management of Volkswagen commercial vehicles, said: "The production launch of the T1 represented the beginning of a long success story that has lasted right up to today. In the past, as well as the present, there is market demand for extremely reliable, versatile and individual vehicles."

"We deliver them in top quality and precisely tailored to every need – whether the vehicle is for trades work, a retail or service business, family or recreation."

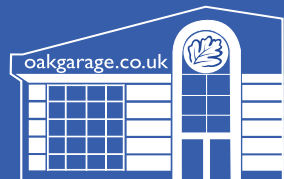
Production of the new generation model, the T6, launches this year. Along with the T-series, the Hannover-Stöcken plant also produces the Amarok pickup.

The successful California recreational vehicle is built not far away in Limmer.

Around 12,200 people are employed at the Hannover business site of Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles.

The Poznan plant in Poland (5,700 employees) produces the Transporter and the Caddy, and another plant is being built in nearby, Wrzesnia for the new Crafter.

Today, a total of around 19,500 employees work for the Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles brand.



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SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. **Tel No: 0905 002 1883 Box No: 413399**

JANET tall beautiful brunette, slim 12, separated, enjoys life, no hang ups, wanting quality time, friendship and possible romance with similar guy. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413415**

ADVENTUROUS sexy lady, 38yrs, married but seeks no strings fun with discreet man, any age, I'm tall, slim and dominant. **Ac. Tel No: 0905 002 1937 Box No: 415301**

ANITA seeking nice man in the West Midlands, 50-70 for companionship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413765**

ANNE, mid 40's, cheerful busty curvy affectionate real woman! Seeks gent, any age or looks for nights at mine. **Tel No: 0905 002 1953 Box No: 410291**

SONYA slim attractive vibrant lady with GSOH, social nature, fit/active, WLTM N/S male up to 60yrs for romantic, genuine respectful relationship, loving. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413441**

DISCREET lady, 42yrs wants to make you happy, come to me and let me do that for you. **ACA. Tel No: 0905 002 1957 Box No: 409991**

EMMA petite slim blue eyed blonde 22yrs, likes cinema, dancing/music, just chillin, seeking easygoing male for fun and good times but nothing serious. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413207**

TARA, confident lady, long legs, long hair, seeks a saucy man of any age for daytime, no strings fun. **Tel No: 0905 002 1913 Box No: 414701**

EUROPEAN beauty romantic, caring, attentive, looking for loving male to enjoy warm loving relationship with, call me to find out more. **ACA. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413013**

KELLY, 42yrs, loves to chat and flirt with guys on-line and by text. **Box No: 4656847**

KAREN 34 blue/green eyed size 12 attractive brunette who loves pube, cosy nights in, kids, seeking special honest guy/dad for poss ltr. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413005**

STACY, 51yrs, new to area, hopes to meet new friends, any age for fun and friendship. **Box No: 4656848**

ROSA 27 sexy senorita seeking older handsome prince charming to whisk me off my feet, enjoy fun times, improve my English and fall in love with. Age/race unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412927**

MARY, 32yrs, attractive brunette loves older mature gents who have lots of interests. **Box No: 4656849**

RITA attractive blonde with a very kind heart seeks special man to share his life with. Please get in touch if like me you are fed up with always being the single friend. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 412987**

CAROLINE, sophisticated feminine lady, just turned 40 and wants to meet new friends. **Box No: 4656850**

ROBERT 59, N/S, fit, slim, seeks attractive slim female for discreet no strings friendship and fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413655**

MALE 49, 6ft, seeks lady for discreet fun times. Must accom. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413619**

ALAN 49, seeks lady for discreet no strings fun. **Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 413757**

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Glassboys grab first win of nine league games

Ramsbottom Utd 0 Stourbridge 1
THE Glassboys picked up three very welcome points from their first win in nine Evo-Stik League games, thanks to an early strike from Kayelden Brown.

There were three changes from the Stourbridge team that faced the same opposition at Amblecote recently.

Josh Quaynor, Josh Morgan-Parker and Kayelden Brown were recalled to the starting eleven in place of Jordan Fitzpatrick, Reece Hales and Chris Knight, who had been unable to shake off the knock he sustained in that match.

Once again Stourbridge were ahead in the opening stages of the game. Just nine minutes had elapsed when a good passing move by the Glassboys left Brown with a simple tap-in to open the scoring.

Stourbridge gained revenge for their midweek defeat by lowly Ramsbottom with Kayleden Brown netting the only goal of the game after just nine minutes.

But the Glassboys also needed keeper Dean Coleman to be at the top of his game in the closing stages to deny the Lancashire outfit a late equaliser and end the away side's nine-match winless run.

Stour completely dominated the first half, helped by Brown's side-footed effort following some excellent work by Junior Smikle.

And it should have been a straightforward three points after Ramsbottom defender Alex Frost saw red just before the break after collecting two bookings.

Vinny Mkendi saw his header kept out by the Glassboys keeper.

Wrens push Team deeper into trouble

Team Dudley 1 Wrens Nest 2
WRENS Nest plunged local rivals Team Dudley further into relegation trouble with a 2-1 win in West Midlands Division One.

Wrens Nest drew first blood when Mitch Blackham was adjudged to have upended leading goal scorer Stuart Hillman, from the resulting penalty Chris Rhodes scored his ninth league goal of the season.

A James Hill thunderbolt from a full 25 yards got TD on level terms. Hillman went close on two occasions before half time.

The second half saw former TD player Ben Scriven grab what would turn out to be the winner on 48 minutes when he latched onto a loose ball on the edge of the area to drive home.

Grant Trevis kept TD in the game with a couple of smart saves.

Heathens new era begins with win

CRADLEY ushered in a new era in perfect fashion as they raced to an impressive 63-27 victory over local rivals Birmingham at Perry Barr.

The Heathens comfortably came out on top against their co-tenants in an exciting season opener to seize control of the Travel Plus Tours Challenge for the Dan McCormick Trophy.

Despite their defeat, Birmingham could take plenty of encouragement on their return to the shale with a battling performance in front of a huge crowd which forced the start of the meeting to be delayed by 10 minutes with large queues at the turnstiles.

The new-look Heathens, seeking their third successive National League title in 2015, were sharper

from the tapes all night as they put in a hugely encouraging display.

Skipper Max Clegg set the tone when he flew from the outside to take the chequered flag from highly-rated Brummies No.1 Adam Ellis in heat one, taking the first of six consecutive Heathens race winners to kick-off the campaign.

Brummies endured some misfortune with Ellis falling during a tight first bend as he took a heat six tactical ride before he experienced bike troubles as he battled for the lead in heat 10. Cradley took full advantage to impress.

Young heat-leader duo Clegg and Nathan Greaves both impressed to lead by example; Greaves bril-

liantly fended off Birmingham top two Ellis and Perry in a blockbuster heat 13 to join his colleague at the front.

Yet it was the Heathens lower order who were perhaps most impressive with Michael Neale and Ellis Perks both playing starring roles.

The duo stormed to a comprehensive 5-1 in heat two.

The two will meet in the second leg at Perry Barr next Wednesday (7.30).

Birmingham: Tom Perry 10, Sam Chapman 6, Adam Kirby 4+2, Adam Ellis 3, Zach Wajtknecht 2, Alex Wilson 2, Harvie Banks 0

Cradley: Max Clegg 14, Matt Williamson 12, Ellis Perks 11+1, Michael Neale 9+1, Nathan Greaves 8+2, Arron Mogridge 7+4, Luke Harris 2+1

History is on the side of Albion boss

Albion 1 Stoke 0
HISTORY tells us that when Albion meet Stoke at The Hawthorns, Tony Pulis wins.

So on Saturday, the Baggies were grateful to have him in their corner for the first time against the side with which he so often ground them down in the past.

And victory against Albion's perennial bogey side meant Pulis can now smell success in his survival quest and an extension to his proud record of never suffering relegation.

You won't hear the boss admitting it, but his latest mission is almost complete and he can start planning for the future.

His Baggies side are not safe yet. But they can almost look forward to another season in the Premier League and one more win should complete the job.

From the lowest point of their season a week earlier, Pulis and Co produced one of their best displays so far to move within touching distance of achieving their goal.

Determination

The head coach is relentless in his determination to eliminate complacency at The Hawthorns, so he will not be counting his chickens in public or letting his players take their survival for granted. Yet after a perfectly-timed response to their massive body blows at Villa, Pulis must acknowledge privately that only a remarkable combination of circumstances in the next two months will see his side dragged back into the relegation scrap.

Barring a freakish turn of events, he will get the chance to mastermind another Premier League campaign on his own terms after spending his first three months with the Baggies fighting fires and treating gaping wounds with sticking plasters.

And the latest step towards securing their Premier League status showed there is more to the Baggies' latest boss than the blood and thunder, rabble-rousing stereotype so often portrayed.

His brand of arch-pragmatism might not be to everyone's taste and, once safety is secured, most Baggies fans will want to see an extra helping of panache added to their team as it moves forward into the full-blown Pulis era.

Brown Ideye scored the all-important goal

Change of captains at golf club



From left lady captain Chris Rollings, Derick from Halas Homes and captain Martin Tumelty

IT'S all change at Halesowen Golf Club as the 2014 captains Martin Tumelty and Chris Rollings have completed their term of office during which they raised £5,000 for small local charity Halas Homes.

Halas Homes started life as a specialist organisation for people with learning disabilities more than 50 years ago.

A group of locals including parents of those with learning disabili-

ties realised a vision to provide support for children and opened in 1967.

The 2015 captains Brian Col-drick and Elaine Povey's chosen charity is the Neonatal Unit at Russells Hall Hospital.

They are hoping to raise £3,000 to buy a phototherapy unit for babies with jaundice. Every pre-mature baby will require photo-

therapy, but some full-term babies also require this therapy. The phototherapy Units are ideal as they can be fitted into most standard hospital cots meaning the baby can stay with their mother.

Throughout this year there will be a captain's monthly draw for donated prizes. Last month there was a captain v vice-captain team challenge for charity. The scores were captains with 1,066 v-cap1,057.

Albion ace Callum is hit with another injury setback

ALBION have suffered a blow with the news £4.5m winger Cal-lum McManaman could be out for three weeks.

But Victor Anichebe has provided a glimmer of hope that his injury worries could be over.

Former Wigan star McManaman hasn't recovered from the foot injury he aggravated in the two games against Villa and is set to miss the next leg of the Baggies' survival push.

McManaman will sit out tomorrow's visit of Stoke, plus the trip to Manchester City in eight days time and may not be fit until possibly the home clash against QPR on April 4.

Manager Tony Pulis said: "Cal-lum is still struggling. It's just flared up and he'll be out for two or three weeks.

"On the two occasions Callum's come off the bench he's had a kick on his foot. It's unbelievable how unlucky he's been." The blow on McManaman is the last thing Pulis wanted as he rallies his troops after the double setback against Villa.

And Pulis, who welcomes his old club Stoke to The Hawthorns tomorrow, admitted his squad is lacking quality and quantity in depth as they approach the final quarter of the season.

The Baggies are eight points clear of the drop zone with 10 games left, but Pulis remains cautious.

"We know how tough it's going to be," he said. "We're light in certain areas and need to be stronger. We're not, and we can't get stronger, so we'll have to get through this period and pick up as many points as we can.

Villa allotted 31,000 seats for the semi

VILLA have been handed an allocation of 31,799 for their FA Cup semi-final – with tickets on sale now.

The club do not yet know whether they will be facing Blackburn or Liverpool at Wembley, or indeed which precise date the tie will take place.

But supporters will still be able to snap up their seats for the big game, which will take place on either April 18 or 19.

Tickets will be priced between £63 and £33 for adults and can be purchased online, by phone or in person at the club's ticket office.

Priority will be given to season ticket holders, with those who have held a season ticket for more than 10 years.

Villa have been allocated Wembley's West Stand.

Tickets will be sold on a strict one per client reference only basis.

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The fascinating city of Reykjavik with its brightly painted wooden buildings stand out in sharp contrast to the stunning beauty of its setting of water, ice and lava fields. With a host of restaurants, bars, cafes and shops selling goods that are no longer eye-wateringly expensive, justifies its claim to be amongst Europe's most 'happening' cities.

Get acquainted with the surroundings on a guided tour. Amongst the highlights will be the extraordinary 'Pearl', a collection of disused water tanks now crowned with a glass dome and a viewing platform offering stunning views of the city and harbour.

See the Presidential Residence in its idyllic shoreside setting at Bessastair, and the brightly coloured fishing town of Hafnarfjörður, as well as the Lutheran Cathedral, the Houses of Parliament and the towering Halgrim's Church.

Join the optional Golden Circle tour to explore Thingvellir, a great lava arena deep in the Continental Rift valley. Take in the active geothermal area site where the 'original' Geysir is now all but extinct, but where its neighbour Strokkur spouts impressively. The day ends with a visit to the stunning Gullfoss waterfall and the Frioheimar greenhouse cultivation centre where produce is grown with the aid of geothermal heat.

For many, the highlight of the trip will be a journey out of the city in search of sighting the fabled Aurora Borealis, the Northern Lights, if lucky enough to view them, they are a never-to-be-forgotten sight.

The five-day break alternative ends with an optional excursion to the world-famous 'Blue Lagoon' outdoor spa, whose mineral-rich waters are recognised for their health-giving properties.

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Sport

History is on boss
Pulis' side

Page 35

It's all change at
golf club

Page 35



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Tividale are taken out of cup running

Tividale FC 0 Chasetown FC 3
TIVIDALE went out of this season's Walsall Senior Cup against Chasetown. There was absolutely no comparison to the Scholars' side that the Tivs took four points off in their earlier league encounters.

Daniel Griffiths was replaced through injury after eight minutes by Jonathon Haynes. Chasetown had the majority of the possession and Tividale were forced to defend and play on the counter. On 23 minutes there was a free kick to Chasetown but Cameron Stuart fired it straight at Tividale keeper Charles Price.

Three minutes later Chasetown were ahead. From a Stuart throw Tividale failed to clear their lines and Chasetown centre half Francino Francis just hooked the ball back into the box and Nathan Waite stabbed it past the wrong footed Price and it rolled into the net.

The rest of the half was all Chasetown. Former Tividale striker Waite then tested Price on 47 minutes with an effort that the keeper gathered comfortably.

Nipped
A minute later and it was Tividale's turn to test the visitors defence when a Chris Field cross was headed towards goal by Karl Edwards but Chasetown keeper John Bateman just nipped in to grab the ball.

Chasetown then punished the home side on 76 minutes when from a Tividale attack they added a second.

Tividale on the attack tried one pass to many and the visitors broke and from the counter Paul Sullivan was left one-on-one with Price and he showed his pedigree with a cool chip over the keeper.

On 88 minutes Tividale conceded a third when Chasetown substitute Mortell Brown cut inside of his marker and fired home from 20 yards.

Brunt to miss City clash following one-match ban

ALBION'S Chris Brunt will miss Saturday's trip to Manchester City after being suspended by the FA – but he has escaped a two-match ban.

Brunt was handed a one-match ban and an £8,000 fine when he appeared before an FA regulatory commission.

But Brunt was effectively given the minimum possible punishment after pleading mitigation during his personal hearing.

Baggies director of football administration Richard Garlick said: "We had a fair hearing and feel the punishment is an acknowledgement by the commission that this was an extraordinary case."

"It was a difficult end to the game for everyone and emotions were running high. I think Chris' disciplinary record, which has seen him issued with one red card in more than 400 appearances at the highest levels, was also rightly noted."

The former captain will miss Saturday's game but can face QPR on April 4.

He was spared a potential two-match suspension and a bigger fine after Albion cited exceptional circumstances.

Squad boosted for the new season

HALESOWEN have boosted their side for the new Birmingham Cricket League Second Division season by swooping for Brockhampton duo Ben Stebbings and Will Barrett.

The Seth Somers Park club are also hoping to welcome back last year's overseas player Tarryck Gabriel with the St Lucia star currently awaiting clearance from the authorities after submitting his visa application.

Opening bat Stebbings boasts a healthy near 40 run average and will bring some much-needed scoring potential to the Halesowen batting after the loss of Will Fraine to Division One side Himley.

Cricket

All rounder Barrett, the captain of the Cambridge MCC University team this year, will add depth to the batting line up and his left arm, fast medium action will bring another dimension to an already potent bowling attack.

Stebbins said: "I'm very excited to be taking on a new challenge and joining an ambitious club looking to reclaim a place in the higher divisions."

Barrett, meanwhile, admits he was impressed with the club's vision for the future.

He said: "I was very impressed with what I

heard from the club in terms of their aspirations for the coming seasons and I'm looking forward to meeting up with the lads shortly. Knowing Stebbo well from our previous club is a massive bonus." Chairman Richard Evans said: "I have no doubt that both Ben and Will will make telling contributions this year and we're very excited that they both chose to join us."

For the first time in its 160 year history the club is proud to announce the formation of a girl's team.

About 18 girls, mainly but not entirely, drawn from the under-10 age group at Howley Grange School have been training together.

YELTZ FORCED INTO A DRAW

Frickley Athletic 1 Halesowen Town 1
A goal by Gavin Allott on 76 minutes denied Halesowen their first win in eight games despite a first half performance when they probably should have been out of sight.

Aaron Daniels was on fire early for the Yeltz and hit the post on three minutes from a tight angle after Frickley keeper Ben Simpson fumbled the ball.

Daniels went close again shortly after but he just failed to intercept a short back pass and Simpson collected.

Ilyseden Christie also went close on eight minutes but it was Daniels who made it 1-0 on 20 when he applied a cool finish after another defensive mistake.

Christie almost made it two but saw his lob go wide, although it was a difficult chance.

Frickley, who started the game in the bottom four, inevitably pushed for an equaliser in the second half and little was seen of Halesowen as an attacking force.

They were forced to soak up a lot of pressure and Allott scored the equaliser on 76 minutes to deny Halesowen all three points.

Halesowen Town 0 FC United of Manchester 1

A bumper crowd of 1,478 saw title favourites FC United of Manchester defy all Halesowen's pressure to snatch victory with a late goal.

The Yeltz pushed forward from the start to force eight first half corners in a hard-fought game between the two best defences in the league.

Aaron Griffiths and Joe Hull both went close early on and a 33rd minute header from Kris Green was tipped away at the foot of the post by FC United goalkeeper David Carnell.

After soaking up the first half pressure, FC United started to find their feet and finally went close in the 41st minute when Greg Daniels flicked on for Thomas Greaves to hit just over the bar.

But FC United showed their title credentials by grabbing all three points when Craig Lindfield netted a 76th minute close range header from Joe Fox's left-wing cross after Lindfield's initial effort was blocked.

Home clash for new Heathens



The new look Cradley Heathens who have their first home clash against the Brummies next week

CRADLEY Heathens stage their first 'home' meeting at Perry Barr Stadium next Wednesday – and teenage star Nathan Greaves can't wait.

The Heathens, who switched to Birmingham for the 2015 season after losing the use of Wolverhampton last October, face the Brummies in the second leg of the Travel Plus Tours Trophy.

And Greaves, the former British Youth Champion, is delighted to have a new home track to build on his experience of the past two seasons.

After taking his first lap around their new venue at the press and practice day last week he is optimistic about what the new season may

hold. Said Greaves: "It was a good day, finally getting some laps under my belt and I felt good in terms of finding different setups for Perry Barr."

"It took me quite a while to get to grips with Monmore and I still didn't quite manage it – as soon as I came close we moved which was frustrating!"

"It's a new challenge now, moving to a new track and it's going to be interesting for sure."

Admission next Wednesday is £11 adults, £8 concessions and £2 children.

A full colour 40-page programme will be available for £3.

● Era – Page 35

That's Owls to do it as Wolves win

Wolves 3 Sheffield Wednesday 1
BAKARY Sako's 18th-minute spot-kick following Nouha Dicko's fall that looked right out of Fernando Forestieri's book of tricks paved the way for a third win in four home games to keep the pressure on the top six.

Benik Afobe and substitute James Henry added the gloss that was slightly tarnished by Richard Stearman's exit on a stretcher 17 minutes from time.

But it was just the sort of determined, full throttle performance to make the missing fans whet their lips in anticipation of Friday night's televised visit of Derby.

Jackett made two changes from the line-up that made it successive draws at Brighton on Saturday.

Scott Golbourne and Nouha Dicko replaced Kortney Hause and James Henry as the boss went for a more attacking team.

Wolves, unusually kicking towards the South Bank in the first half, immediately set about putting Wednesday under pressure.

The home side chased an early breakthrough and took the lead.

Nouha Dicko skipped past the challenge of Helan and was still accelerating when he was caught by minimal contact from Claude Dielna, who had made three glorious interceptions earlier to deny the fired-up Wolves attack.

Referee Simon Hooper had no hesitation in pointing to the spot.

If Wolves thought they were going to repeat their furious first half by laying siege to the Wednesday goal, they were sadly mistaken. Instead the Owls tried in vain for the equaliser.

Wolves broke to double their lead with the in-rushing Afobe to meet a cross on the volley.

And Henry duly made it 3-0.

Villa are given a new date for QPR

PREMIER league club Villa have confirmed they have a new date for their home Premier League clash with relegation strugglers QPR.

The game will now be played on Tuesday, April 7 with the kick off being at 7.45pm.

The match had been scheduled to take place on Monday, April 20 but the game now clashes with Villa's FA Cup semi-final against either Blackburn or Liverpool.

The match was originally chosen for Sky TV coverage but will now not be televised. Villa progressed into the semi-finals after beating rivals Albion.

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